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HSTQ
FALL 2019

Three Years On
Arthur Graham

This fall marks the third anniversary of HSTQ, the first issue of which we published back in September of 2016.

Much has changed in the world since then, but then much has remained the same. And while even the lunatics here at HST couldn't possibly have predicted we'd have an overgrown Oompa Loompa in the White House, we also had no way of knowing we'd still be cranking out these issues today. Whatever the case, in a world that has come to seem ever more uncertain, it's nice to know that some things haven't changed!

With that in mind, please join us in celebrating three years of HSTQ, with hopefully many more yet to come.

Arthur Graham
Salt Lake City, September 2019

The Last Summer Sun
Mendes Biondo

there will be farewells and goodbyes
words of reassurance
eyes full of tears
but not now

there will be the smell of train brakes
at some provincial railway station
rivers swollen with fall rain
but not now

there will be our last hug
the sun fleeing to the west
shining on all windows
but not now

now there are fingers intertwined
hot and lustful kisses
your breasts still full of summer
and the slow dance of your womb

now there is your skin
now there is your hair
now your eyes surround me
in the warmth of their embrace

autumn will come
with his cap of dead leaves
and the chill of the new season
but not now

now we are here
naked and on fire
burning in the flames
of the last summer sun

St. Tropez Tan
Ben Newell

Driving
to my dishwashing job
when I see
a big-ass beer truck
parked outside Walgreen's...

CORONA
FIND YOUR BEACH

The driver mops his brow
with a handkerchief
then hoists another
backbreaking case.

He hasn't found his
and something tells me
he likely never will—

As for me
the only water on the horizon
is mixed with
commercial-grade detergent
and sanitizer.

But I'll keep getting shit-faced
and dreaming
of hot sand beneath my feet
as topless French women
beg for my autograph.

Strange Visit
Alan Catlin

Lost somewhere in that limbo
place where dreaming meets
a total drunk, the two fusing into
one, overlapping the way loose skin
does on top of what lies beneath.
She comes, then, as half-human,
half-apparition in that hour before
dawn in the bar, lights down,
only the EXIT signs clear and well
defined. Certainly not the place
where her eyes should be
in the tarnished back wall mirror.
Nothing but shadows
and dust and flakes where her face
should be, where vision has lost clarity,
nothing as it should be and what moves,
does so fast and almost formless
just below the horizon
on the edge of sight,
beckoning as it does so,
for all to follow
to that place
where she is going,
where all dreams end.

Cum Baby Cum!

David Boski

She kept repeating:
“cum baby cum! cum baby cum!”
in a song-like rhythm.
The problem was I couldn’t cum,
but I kept trying, there with an Asian
hooker in my bathroom with her repeating:
“cum baby cum!”
in her high-pitched accent.

We were in the bathroom cause I let my friend
use the bedroom when the first hooker arrived;
banking on the fact that he’d be done by the time
mine got there, and that the next one would be more
attractive than the first.

Our other two friends stayed in the living room,
drinking and watching TV.
Eventually the hooker,
now on her knees, looked up at me and said:
“no cum?” and I looked down, shook my head,
and said: “no cum.”

She got dressed and I went out into the living
room, seeing my friends, including the one who
had the first hooker. I asked how it was and he
said it was terrible: he couldn’t cum. I said neither
could I, and then another friend asked if he could
borrow some cash, said he wanted to give it a go.

We advised against it. All signs were pointing to us
being way too drunk to fuck Asian hookers at 4AM
in the morning; but he didn’t listen, and he didn’t
cum either.

from the god they prayed to their entire lives

J.J. Campbell

the fourth of july
has come and gone

no fireworks around
here

too many people still
dealing with the fallout
from the memorial day
tornadoes

souls still in shock
waiting for a check

from the insurance

from the government

from the god they
prayed to their
entire lives

each passing day
is another nail into
the coffin

of course, the local
news will find the
crazy woman who
has the same ceiling
that has collapsed twice

once from the tornado
and once from all the rain

she’ll smile into the camera
and tell everyone it’s going
to get better, we just need
to stay strong

i believe they call that
the definition of insanity

Ballad of The Gas Station Checkout Girl
Casey Renee Kiser

Have you ever seen
the afterglow
of one who decided
not to go–
decided... in the nick of time
that the time...wasn't quite right
I noticed her
from far back in the line
I always look at wrists
When it was my turn
to buy beer and chips,
our eyes screamed together
and our hands touched
as she gave me change–
money...
always gets in the way

The Drooper
John D Robinson

'Wow! I'm sorry, I mean,
it's not you, it's me!' I said
pathetically, confused and
disappointed:
'Look, don't worry, it
happens, it's the alcohol'
she said kindly:
'I've been drunk for years
and I've been fucking for
years and this has never
happened!' I was
embarrassed and
in shock:
'Please, it's nothing, lets
wait until morning then
see what happens' she
suggested:
at 7am I was fully restored
and by 8am we had sexually
exhausted one another and
lay satisfied as others were
making their way to the
offices, factories, buses,
trains, building sites, shops
I said 'Would you like some
wine?, I've a bottle
in the fridge'
'Wine is the most important
drink of the day' she
replied and I knew we
were making it good.

The Splash
Anthony Dirk Ray

late one night
outside a dingy bar
where my band played
occasionally
and I was a bartender
part time

punk, metal, and
eclectic bands were featured
and vibes were usually laid-back

however
frat boys and trouble makers
would sometimes show up
to watch their friends play
get drunk and start shit

I stepped outside
a muggy summer breeze
making me instantly sticky

people were milling about as usual
laughing, talking, smoking, drinking
this bar was near the corner
of several gay bars so the gays
were milling about as well

one ignorant fuck in attire
more suited for a brunch date
starts talking loud about
“all these fags”
within earshot of a six foot four
black transvestite

the word ‘fag’
was not well received

the white boy was maced
blinded, pissed, embarrassed
his ego hurt more than his eyes

he attempted to fight
but to no avail
then chased and beaten
with six-inch stiletto heel

begging for mercy
but there was none to be had
just a bloody mess on Conti Street

he should have known better
because under that wig,
that makeup, that dress,
there was still a very
large black man
fag or not

coincidentally,
an old-school hoopty
with windows rolled down
rode by playing
“More Than a Woman”

Strange Country
Damion Hamilton

I was in a strange country
Hot and humid, it felt right,
like how it should be
instead of how it was

It was warm and sunny,
music like waterfalls undulating
And the women were warm and inviting
And I took my clothes off and felt things
in my crotch

No one made me feel ashamed for this,
I was just able to do it
And the ladies were nice and didn't make
me feel ashamed or perverted at all

It was a strange country
with no clouds or chilly weather,
and prettiest girl kissed you on the cheek
She spoke in a language you would never know
in detail, but you understood every word

Afterwards, your body felt
as if had been floating
with the moon

You would have to find
the strange country more often

Somewhere on the other side
of main street

Somewhere way down
the street from here

tub boy
Johnny Scarlotti

in the park bathroom
on the toilet

took some laxatives earlier
haven't shat in svn days

tried hella times
but it's just not coming out

it's 9:40
park closes in 20 minutes

push push puush

just a couple small turds come out

push push *ahh*

i debate goin to the ER
my stomach is in so much pain

then i hear someone enter the bathroom

i hear them walk up to my stall

...

a head appears (!?)

a hand

an arm

reaching under the stall

grabbing my leg

pulling me out

what the hell! i scream and kick

he screams “give me your fucking wallet!”

no way, alls i got is 10 dollars

“hell no bitch!”

i get to my feet and try to fight him
but it’s kinda hard when your pants are around your ankles

this is bad

“i’m going to beat the shit out of you!” he yells

he punches me in the face

i fall on my ass

he kicks me in the stomach

he bends over reaching for my wallet

i’m holding him off for now but not for long he’s too strong...

then i feel it

ooo shit, it’s coming

ooOO

then i get an idea

(shout outs to tub girl)

“you fucked with the wrong guy!” i yell,
rolling my legs behind my head

i aim

then pushpush*PUUUSH*

and a fountain of shit shoots into his face

bull's-eye

he runs for the exit, projectile vomiting

he slips on puke n shit and falls

i pull up my pants, get to my feet

he gets up and tries to run out again but slips and falls again

he’s completely covered in shit n vomit

miraculously none got on me

i rip the paper towel dispenser off the wall and bash him over the head
unconscious

“BITCH!”

then i steal his backpack, cigs, flask, cell phone, car keys, wallet with 60
bucks in it, squirt on him some more, wipe my butt, wash my hands, and
get the hell out of there in his 2005 ford escape. beep beep!

i take a few more shits inside it, smear it all over, then leave it on the side
of the highway out of gas, bash out a window, slash one tire. i think that’s
enough. we’re even now.

feeling good. feeling light as a feather. 200 miles closer to my destination
and enough to buy a train ticket the rest of the way.

YEEEHAW

Bear Food
Maté Jarai

I went to the mountains
the bears didn't eat me
the snowfall didn't bury me
there was no plane crash
I made it back
but she wasn't here anymore
and whenever I think about
getting eaten by a bear
which is often
now I can only picture
Leonardo DiCaprio in my place
because of that film he did
and bear food is no longer
an authentic death for me
so I'll live.
It was the only death
I wanted.

The Weight of a Black Anvil Night
Jacob Ian DeCoursey

I'll pull out
and cum on her, keep cumming,
keep cumming until she is trapped in white.

In time, the white will harden, then crack.
And she will emerge a moth,
flutter out the door

toward clouds bruised
by the weight
of a black anvil night.

If there's a rainbow around the moon,
I'll watch her go,
but only if.

Forgive me, but I'll need the distraction,
some color to look away towards
and pretend is significant.

But tonight, she lies naked in my bed,
legs wrapped around my waist, and asks,
Why haven't you written a poem about me?

I stop and tell her,
Because I'm not miserable,
and because you're here.

either way I'll be talking about my poems
Scott Manley Hadley

I was the kind of youth
Who aspired to live a life
As a man of maxims.

I read too much Oscar Wilde
At a formative age
In fact
The day after I lost my virginity
I watched a production of *A Woman of No Importance*
And I remember quipping
For years afterwards
That it was the second event
That gave me more pleasure.

The bon mot I dropped
The most
Was one I found terribly droll:
Cocaine, I'd say, is the same as sex:
I only want it
When I've recently had some.

And though the years have passed
And I am no longer a partyboy
I am aware
As I age
That sexual hunger
Is more present
Than I'd hoped.

It does not go away with neglect,
But I do not struggle,
When in full mental health
To find someone
Who will touch me.

Dating is cheaper than cocaine
But sometimes the conversations it results in
Are just as tedious.

Either way,
I'll be talking about my poems.

Testosterone
Bogdan Dragos

she doesn't let me drink
and insists
that I listen to her

insists with
a viciousness

"It's because you work night shifts,"
she says.

"What's that got to do with drinking
while I'm free?"

"Alcohol lowers a man's
testosterone level and
increases estrogen.
Why don't you know that?
You need to take better
care of yourself."

she made for me a diet
with rice and garlic

calls me while on the night shift
and tells me to go into the bathroom
and jump 100 times
and do stretching exercises,
tells me to drink more water
She even buys me bags of nuts and seeds
and tells me to eat between meals

"No sugar," she says.
"No, not even in coffee.
Pure black or nothing."

she encouraged me to eat
raw eggs but stopped when
I told her that you can get
salmonella like that

when I came home from work
one evening at 23:36
I ate my rice with garlic
and she asked if I wanted anything else
and I said "Yeah, a beer."

"Okay," she said. Went into the kitchen
came back fifteen minutes later with
a cup of tea and a lemon

"What's this?" I asked.

"Ginger tea. It's better with lemon.
Should I squeeze it for you?"

"No thanks, I'll do it myself."
I cut the lemon in half
and squeezed it into the cup

It was the nectar of gods
and I didn't hesitate
to tell her so

"All right then," she said.
"Drink it all, rinse with water
before brushing your teeth
and then come to bed."

I did all that and went to bed

and she wanted me to sleep
because lack of sleep
is the worst enemy
of a man's testosterone levels

the thinness of walls
Jack Henry

a crowd gathers outside room 13,
a battle rages inside –
i step from my room close by
as a woman screams –

scared faces look at me,
various people from various worlds –
'do something,' they say, without using words –
the proprietor runs up,
cops will be here soon,
but soon is not soon enough –

a woman screams again –
i kick in the door of room 13 –

a man holds a woman by the throat,
lets her go,
his hands clench into tight fists –
my hands clench too –

the first blow put him down –
blow after blow after blow,
knuckles bloodied,
bones broken –
knockout decision –

the woman looks at me,
grabs her clothes, steals his keys,
takes his car, and disappears clean –
i snatch up a rolled of bills,
a fat bag of dope,
and turn for the door –

the crowd thins, back to their hiding –
the proprietor says,
the cops will be here soon
but not soon enough –

I make the interstate,
fade & flow into a shimmering night –
pull into a rest stop thirty miles east –
quartzsite, arizona

a beaten woman frozen
behind the wheel of a stolen
car looks at me,
waves meekly,
eyes glassy & gone
i give her half the cash
recently acquired from
an unconscious man –

sometimes life is worth everything,
sometimes only half –

Time For a Change
A.Theist

when i found myself
legs in the air
in thigh highs
ten inches of rubber
protruding from my ass
a stinging load
between my eyes
i said to myself,

“i should make a change”

and upon further deliberation
i couldn't be more certain,

i'd like to try
the ankle socks
next time.

Mirror Figures
Thumper Devotchka

Go figure doll.
Watch that figure doll.
Figure it all out.

On Fridays,
mirror figures will take my life.
Go figure doll.
Drop the sugar rules.
Be a darling,
my sweetened schoolgirl.
Be a darling,
know what you're good for.

And don't let them stain
your skin with fingertips.
Don't let them stay long enough
to backhand, or leave handprints.

On Fridays,
mirror figures will lie more.
The camera will add ten times
the amount that I asked for.

My fun costs
whatever you got soldier,
and no I'm not
from around here.
Ask me next year
when I've grown older
and more desperate.

Like men who ask dolls
what fun costs.

My Wife and My Penis are Having an Affair
Garvan Giltinan

My wife and my penis are having an affair
They appear
friends.
Huddle together
And
Stare into each other's eyes
Whisper in the dark.
To the music
of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel.

I flick on the lights,
they jump apart.
I say nothing.
Art
and the sound of silence.
I offer
the benefit of the doubt.
Friends. Am I sure?

Amour
My wife's allure

Do they more than whisper?

Boys night.
We hang out.
Gunther, my penis, urges the conversation around
to my wife's smooth skin and dark bobbed hair.
"Her breasts are soft to the touch" he sounds.
Inserts the statement surreptitiously
into the flow of the conversation
and acts nonchalant.
Silence
Hums Scarborough (af)Fair.
And 50 ways
To leave with his lover.

I say nothing.

My wife dolls herself up.
A clue.
A sign
An assignation
Behind my back.
Right in front
Of me?

I wake at night
to the two,
tugging at each other's hearts.
To the music of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel.
Now they are never apart.
I believe they are in love and plan to leave,
depart
and be together, and visit art galleries
and start a new life.

Apart from me.

They deserve each other.
Both are very needy.