

HORROR SLEAZE TRASH

BEN SMITH



HORROR *Sleaze* TRASH

10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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Horror Sleaze Trash: 10th Anniversary Edition

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Layout and design by {ths}

Edited by Ian Shearer and Arthur Graham

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The Horror! The Horror!

Ten Years On

Ten fucking years. Ten long fucking years between me now and all that white-knuckled, blood-stained horror, that cherry pink-lipped sleaze and wine-soaked trash.

This book nearly fucking killed me to write. I wanted it to be pure and unabashed. Embarrassing and endearing. All of my monsters and madness unleashed. Poetry, desperation, that obsession to write and be read. To LIVE what I wrote and write the TRUTH. Always writing because I wanted to be loved, to be seen, to be alive and most of all, to be free. It all started here in these pages.

All that selfishness compounded into poorly written verses. The failure and success. Misunderstood or just plain hated. Criticised or cheered on, always fucking drunk and in love and broken and lost. All of them feelings washed clean in the space of a single ten-year blink. And yet here I am – writing once again for the first time since God knows when. Still wanting to be free. Still hoping to finally be understood. Crossing my fucking fingers and cracking my knuckles all at once. Still at war with the world, with the word. All them fucking words...

So much has come and gone as I have aged over time. This book is like the gospel of a life I used to live. I don't *need* to be loved anymore, I have it: A wife and two sons who are my world. All that attention seeking, the desperation, the desire to be "free" – what a wank. Fuck the words is what I now say.

Years trying to emulate Buk like so many others. Thinking if I just maintained – just stayed on the fringe, just went further than anyone else – I would finally fucking make it. It wasn't until I sobered the fuck up that I finally figured things out. Buk was right about one thing at least: Don't try. Trying is desperate and ugly. It's unbecoming of a man. Simply just be – be if you want to be free.

The words don't matter anymore, but back when they did, this is the book that came out of me. I truly hope you enjoy it. I know the great layout and design by the wonderful {ths} still holds up just as beautiful and strong today as it did ten years ago. True art lives forever.

Ten fucking years, man. Have a look at you now, Ben. Big bushy beard, sober on a Monday night in front of the TV. Still wearing that same old, worn-out Fangoria shirt. No human shit in the cat bowl tonight. No dick down the neck of a beer bottle. You have come a long way, baby.

And so I dedicate this anniversary edition of HORROR SLEAZE TRASH to the old Ben John Smith. You were a wild man but I always knew you had the best intentions. I hope I haven't let you down either. I'm really fuckin' trying, dude. I am.

Ben John Smith

Find what you love and let it kill you

– Charles Bukowski

“Horror Sleaze Trash”

By Ben Smith

Edited by Ian Shearer
Design and Layout {ths}

D e d i c a t e d t o C h a r l i e .

A l s o , a b i g t h a n k s t o M i k e D a i l y f o r b e i n g a d u d e .

HOFFER.

“I was

on the point of crying at her,

‘Don’t you hear them?’

The dusk was repeating them

in a persistent whisper all around us,

in a whisper that seemed to swell

menacingly like the first whisper

of a rising **wind**. **‘The Horror! The horror!’**”

Heart Of Darkness

Joseph Conrad

I'm a World Famous Poet

Me and my girl
stand
at the kitchen table.

In my hand is a cold tin.
In hers, a flume of pink
champagne.

A girl with massive tits
and the prettiest
brown curls
you ever saw
calls me "the poet"
and
asks to **fuck the both of us
in an orgy I couldn't handle
anyway.**

But we have to speak to her boyfriend
'cause he's a little bit shy.

On the drive home,
with the passing red lights
a smudge to my
drunken eyes,
I say,

*"You hear that, baby?
They called me a poet.
I'm a world-famous poet..."*

I drink the last
warm dregs of my beer,

throw it out the window.

At home I fall asleep on the couch
and dream about the end of the world.

In my dream,
everyone is panicking.
Saying silly things
like,

**"We are all going to die!
Somebody save us!
We are all going to die!"**

But not me.
I'm a world-famous poet.
I'm relaxed and calm.

Sleeping on the couch at my mum's
in a puddle of warm drool
and a semi-tented
pair of dirty blue
jeans.

The Edge

a man pushes his daughter
in a wheel chair
to the front of the ocean
on a winding
road on the cliff side.

She stares out
despondently
and drools on
her shoulder.

We are all trying to
prove to each other
that this world
is a
beautiful
place.

CHUMP

My girl calls me a chump
for giving away my books.

She thinks if your mates
can't spend thirty bucks
on a piece of your soul
but will
gladly drop fifty on a three-
legged nag at short odds,
it kinda shows the state
of this
mess
we are in.

A kangaroo out the front
of her home
lies dying
in a ditch.

I sit with him
in the pouring rain
and try to keep his
black eyes
on the lily whites
of my own.

I tell him
it's all going to be okay.
I'm lying
and
he can tell.

The widow next door
waddles around
in a leopard print
night gown
and leaves cherry red lipstick

on the butts
of her
cigarettes.

The big red roo
lies in the ditch,
dying.

Its leg broken by a car.

It lies there,
bleeding in the rain
on this early
Saturday morning.

I sit with him a while
and wait for the coppers
while the rain
drips from my hood.

The police revolver
sounds twice,
in cosmic booms,
and my friend drops his head
into the mud
and dies like
a frightened
hero.

I understand
why my friends don't buy this shit.

I hope my girl knows
why I give it away.

Sea Shells in my Shit

It's my sister's going away party.

I eat a handful of sea shells
from a bottle on top of the toilet.

I want something to remind me of her.

I was drunk
and they were only very
small
but each mouthful
hurt my throat.

I swallowed them one at a time
very drunk,
half-expecting to vomit them up.

But I didn't.

For the next few days I shit sea shells.

Thinking of her
when I stare at my turd.
Beautiful
spiral and round sea shells

floating in my shit,
like an island on the beach.

I sneak outside and have a cigarette.

Life always turns out
the way it should.

Half a Heart

On television

there is a little boy
who only has half a heart.

He says,

*"I wish I had a whole heart,
just like my
mum and dad."*

He says it with a beautiful smile
that could chip a
tooth.

He has a hot mother,
I remember that.

Great cheek
bones.

I open a beer after his scene
and run a bath.

The radio plays
'50s jazz.

I dance with my girl.
She is wearing her pyjamas
while I swing
naked.

We dance quietly
with bare feet
together
on the floor boards
of my home
with the television still
playing
in the other room.

Then she leaves me alone

with the swing
and the radio
and the world of guilt
and the wish
that I only had
half a heart
too.

We have a super sixteen,
and the eight ball syndicate.

He hands me a photocopy of the tickets.

*"This is the one,"
he says,*

*"good numbers –
lucky ones.*

*They tried to charge me
ten cents a page for the
photocopies."*

Old man Johnny,
with hands that
are bloated and bumpy with
gout and arthritis.

"Ten cents," he murmurs,

and one more time
he rubs his hands together,

"Ten cents."

*"These are the ones Benny boy.
The lucky numbers."*

I look up at the bookie screens,
take a good slug of beer,
look back at Johnny
and his broken hands.

"Lucky numbers,"

I say.
"Shit my friend,
I think
that we
are
fucked."

Lotto^{The}

Foolish

She asks me
in the shortest time possible
why I can't write a
nice poem
about pretty things
that don't include
sweaty dicks
and eyelid type
opening vaginas.

And as I entertain
such a foolish and
romantic notion,

I quietly start
to
cry.

CHURCH-GOING FO

The poor old bird's got a burnt
face.

It stretches across her mouth
and twists it all around
in orgasm O's
and painful looking
snarls.

Her nose is burnt charcoal;
two black pits
in the centre
of her face.

Judy kisses her when she comes
in.

On top of a few milk crates
the Yamaha
plays clumsy,
cheap,
unlearned keys
with a jangle
that rouses the pack
to stand up and sing.

Ian in his home-knitted
cardigan,
shakes like Ali
and his Bible bounces
like a pick-up truck.

All the short,
the lonely,
and the queer
huddle around in this blue stone
shack to worship.

A young lady is getting baptized
before she gets married.

With her head over the sink
she closes her eyes and
streams of wet
slip across her face and
mat her hair
into shiny strands
that cling to her face.

She is embarrassed.

We all look and clap.

Welcome,
I say in my head.

It will only cost you a
slim five bob note
for the collection plate
over the offertory hymn
every week
for the rest of your life;

LK

to witness the most beautiful people
in the whole
wide world.

She still smiles,
but her hair is all wet
and wrapping around her forehead.

After service
we drink tea and kiss
and shake hands
and say,

"Peace be with you, Ben."

Five bucks a week.

And maybe a wet forehead
every now and then.
To rub shoulders
with the saddest,
and loneliest cats in the
entire world...

Five bucks;
ain't
nothing
wrong with that.

Jump in the Line

The dominoes are like bone.

They clink together
as they get packed away into a brown
leather case.

Every Sunday they meet;
the same four people.

Today Albert won.

He is ninety years old.
He pulls each penny across the
table,

one penny at a time,

one
by
one.

He counts them aloud,
stopping every now and then
to give a running tally.

He has a sticky
grey jacket with
English and Irish pins.

He says,

*"Three pounds I've won!
England can win!"*

It's a bloody white wash!"

Then he hangs his head,
close to the coins,
and says to himself,

*"I'm a
very
very
lucky man."*

Your Fucking Ring

I open a drawer
and show her all
the coins I've
been saving.

She laughs
like the devil
and screams
drunkenly,

"Is that for my ring?"

I shuffle,
twist awkwardly.
Move my dick
around my
briefs.

"Oh my God!"

*How cute
it is!"*

I pretend
I'm not ashamed
and she
will have to wait
a little while
yet.

Forgive Me God

I face the wall and take a piss.
A man in a flannelette shirt says,

"It's strange saying Merry Christmas in July."

I respond,

*"I know, right,
any excuse
to get drunk."*

At the table a little boy opens
mystery dips to find
tea towels.

We show each other videos of our cats
from our mobile phones.

Her husband is dead
and the guy beside her is

D'Arne sleeps in my sister's bed.

"Oh, just a fuck."

I pass out on the couch.

She starts to cry.

Forgive me God,
you motherfucker.

I remember a wind once
that made my dad's eyes water
when we were quoting a job
on a shit farm.

You motherfucker,
forgive me.

Everyone must have thought something
terrible just happened
and that we were just really
strong people.

DMV

With half a fat
I read Henry Miller
next to a pregnant woman
and a black fella
covered with lice.

I keep my head down and read.

I'm afraid someone
is going to stab me in the back
and I will feel the most amazing pain.
I can see it all happening in my head.

On the floor,
bleeding to death.
My ticket number
next to my hand.

My jeans poked out,
tented,
with a semi-boner.

And the bird behind the counter saying,

"Ticket 179?"

"Ticket 179?"

Over and over.

"Ticket 179?"

Dead Man's Beaker

Work is slow
so I tile a few days
with old Johnny
from the pub.

He's vomiting on the front lawn
beside his Daewoo Lanos
when the Pakistani fella
who owns the joint
shows me through the punch list.

His mouth is puffy,
like a chipmunk.
Like the radiator chick
from
Eraserhead,
exactly.

Says,

I got cancer
but my wife -
she doesn't know -
so just tell her
I'm at work.

I will be in hospital
for a while,
but I want this done
so my wife won't have
to worry about it
when
I'm gone.

The list is short:
- Lift some pavers.
- Tile the gazebo.
- Set up self-watering system.

He knows.

While he's gone.

He walks around
in a pimped-out suit,
looking dapper
while his hands finger each other
at his chest
like Mr. Burns
from *The Simpsons*.
His big jaw like a side boob.
A gristly chunk of meat.

His wife looks out
through the window,
tells me she's excited
to get this stuff finally
finished.

It's been so long,
she says.

I steal a measuring beaker
from his garage.

I'll look after it,
I think.

You know,

just
while he's gone.

Cleft Ass Hole

The lift door opens
and I stand there covered in shit.
Head to toe.

Like a gollywog.

Old mate – black suit – stands
there
and clenches
his cleft ass hole.

"I think I'll take the next one,"

he says without so
much as a grin.

We meet at the bottom
at the same time
and from lily white eyes
(that talk)
glowing from a dirty
black face,

I tell him to go and fuck
his hopefully dead mother.

But only with my eyes.
I'm not stupid–
for God's sake man,
I don't want to lose my job!

Lose all of this!

He responds with eyes that say,

*"Leave me alone child,
I'm a very busy man."*

I bet he shits
like a drainpipe
during a thunderstorm.

THE BIG FELLA

He has his head
in his almighty hands.

Crying.

Next to us.

Saying,
*“What in my name
are you crazy
sons-of-bitches
doing!”*

The Best Poem I Ever Wrote

One day soon

I will leave you all
with the little things
about me
you thought
would never change.

And remembering me
how I wasn't

will be easier

than pretending
to forget

who I was.

PRESERVE THE LIES

Bach composes violoncello minute
and at thirty-eight seconds
she walks into my room
and cringes at the sight of me
pouring wine into a pint glass.

And her eyes break
like Christmas tree
decorations.

Or a plug that has
never been
unplugged.

She says,
"What in GOD'S name are
you doing?"

And with an ugly truth
I lower my head
like a child with dirty palms
and say,

"I'm pretending to be famous."

She whispers to God.
The cat brushes past her
bare
feet.

I don't know what
she said

or if he heard

but I bet
he doesn't
need her
as much
as I do.

Cemetery Hot Pants

I love watching the girls
run around the cemetery
in the just-warming
mornings.

In the early light.

With their perky little tits
built on stretched chest
pectorals.

Ear phones.

Running white
from their little faces
that are flushed and
beet red.

The jiggly German
sausage
asses
rimmed with a half
crescent
of glistening white
sunlight.

While the meat inside
sticks and morphs
from form to form.

Me and all the dead bodies
that rot inside the
cemetery

watch them
run
around.

HEAR WHAT YOU WANT TO HEAR

Deliberating another bottle
of wine
I ask her if we
can sleep in tomorrow
as late as possible.

She wakes up
from her sleep on the couch
and says,

"Somewhere over the rainbow?"

It's playing on the
television.

I say,
"What, you mean
like the song?"

"Yeah,"
she says,
"something like that."

Then,
the bottle cracks
like a roar
of quiet
thunder.

Time

I hold up my fork
and my beer
and my head

and say,

"Time will make strangers
of us all."

Macaroni and cheese
slaps onto my plate.

I regard it.

*"Oh God,
now he's going to
write a book about it,"*

says my sister.

The table gets packed away
and I sit there in a drunken
stupor.
Someone turns
out the light.

The Drive

We drive around
most of the day
from job site to
job site.

I'm re-reading
Nick Cave's
*The Death of Bunny
Monroe.*

I don't want to make
him feel uncomfortable
because I know he wishes
he could read too
so I put the book down
regularly and stare
out the
window.

He looks down
every now and then
with his pale
egg-white eyes
and asks me
if the book's any good.

When I finish it,
my eyes tear up and
I tell him it was good.

It was
just
kinda sad.

My Monroe

She doesn't want
what she's
got.

Doesn't want
to just stand there
and look
smoking hot.

Doesn't want to be
a wallflower.

Not *just* a pretty face.

She tells me this
while I sit on the couch
and sip at
another beer.

Probably the 13th
for the night.

I say,

"So you want me to
be like Bruce Willis
in *Unbreakable*?"

Pretending like
I'm anything more
than a bloke with a
shit head
and dreams of
being
remembered.

It's the beer talking
and I'm being
a little too honest

Cemetery Hot Pants II

The overcast sky
hues everything
grey.

It's cold and
the rain falls
as if
it can hardly
be fucked
with itself.

There are no hot pants.

No pec-drawn chests.

An old man trundles past
on a push bike
and a pork pie hat.

Like Satan.

I sit with the dead.
Them hard and gone,
me soft
and waiting.

Bank Robbery

I hear
about a bank robbery
that was botched
when a fat chick
stands up and tells
the strung-out junkie
with a shotgun
that "Jesus says
everything is
okay and
he has not to
worry anymore."
He shoots her in the
face and
most of her memories
spill with
most of the blood
left in her head.
Every key I hit now
sounds like the
bang of that
gun shot.

*"I can't do this
anymore,"*

she says,

through a trembling and
wet
bottom lip.

*"I can't just sit around here
while you get drunk
and pretend to be famous."*

Her skin is incredibly soft
and I mention this only
so you can feel the desperation
of losing something
so tender.

Maybe^{Famous}

"But baby –"

I roll from the couch and
slip onto the floor,
like a dead salamander.

I lay there
with my arms out-
stretched.

"You know I love you."

Every email I send.
Every friend I pretend I love.
All the letters I write.
The lies.
The embarrassment.

*"You know I'm making moves,
girl."*

I say it to the floor,
because she has gone to bed.

Making moves I think,

moves straight to the
toilet to
be
sick.

War Pig

War was perhaps
the best thing
to happen in this world.

It killed the falseness,
the pretence,
the immaturity
of love
in the modern sense.

In the sense without war.

It gave passion and
purpose,
and shadowed all the other
madness
of first dates and
“get me a chicken
sandwich”
quarrels.

It made
love worthwhile,

not the fickle
and intangible
show bag
it is today.

I wish war was
more plentiful.

It gave us
genuine life,
in all of its
death.

Deluded

Eating minestrone soup
always made me feel like
a gangster.

Pull apart bread,
butter,
Cinzano,
classical music.

Intelligence has
nothing
over the power
of
delusion.

BLIND NESS

Like empty hands
that clutch at straws,
or the hair
in the wind
from the top
of a mountain.

I want my heart to drain
of blood
like an orgasm.

Like the echo
in a whip's crack.

I want the last of my breath
to bellow down the
pipes of a trumpet
and sing,

*"Free at last,
free at last,
thank God almighty,
we are free at last."*

No More

There is no more paper
to write on.

And all the other pages
are full with
sleaze and lies
and half-truths.

There are no more
lines
left empty.

And with a pen
that draws empty
in each kiss of the white,
I can sense
that there may never be
another empty page.

There is no more paper to write on
and it's a shame,
because I always wanted
to write
something happy.

Something to make you smile.
There are no more pages
to write on,
and for the first time
in my life,

I don't think
that's the worst
thing
that
could
happen.

Sickness^{Motion}

I remember in primary school
when we went to the zoo for an excursion.

And everyone was young
and cute
and excited.

I remember
a little boy that sat next to me
who was,
of course,
my best friend at the time.

I remember him being sick
and vomiting watery yellow mush
into a plastic bag
that had a hole in it.

Vomit ran down his legs
onto his beautiful
clean, grey, pants
his mother had ironed for him
that morning,
in a rush before work.

I remember
the whole bus smelled like sick.

I remember
every one was silent and whispering...
holding their noses and pointing.

I remember him looking at me,
my best friend,
with red, wet eyes,
from being sick and crying.

I remember those eyes saying,

*"For God sake man,
help me out,
sit closer to me,
don't leave me alone."*

But I did.

Like a coward.

And as the bus rocked,
and the sick kept falling from the bag,
I edged further and
further away from him.

From my friend.

Until the bus stopped
and he got himself changed
into the three sizes too small
back-up pants,
and wandered around the zoo
all day
picking his wedgie,
holding the teacher's hand.

Sucking on a lollipop that made
all the other children jealous.

And
watery yellow
with envy.

Seize.

*Now the works of the
flesh are evident: sexual
immorality, impurity,
sensuality, idolatry,
sorcery, enmity, strife,
jealousy, fits of anger,
rivalries, dissensions,
divisions, envy,
drunkenness, orgies, and*

things like these. I warn you, as I warned
you before, that those who do such things
will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Galatians 5:16-16

Mon Paris

Oh sweet Paris.

Oh gay and wondrous
streets of Hilton and
horn
check out twice,
the sweet hairs of Paris.

Like a tuft of swarming
black
cracked pepper mice
leaving home,

and walking down the legs,
before getting drenched
with quarterback jizz.

Oh,
sweet Paris!

Oh!
The sweet moans
of gay Paris!

The Champs Elysees
has never been
fucked quite as hard
as your
button
cute
little
cunt.

Oh my love,
the love of us all,
the jealous
and the
sick.

Hold your breast,
let it go,
hide your face under the
hotel duvet.

I know you're sad,
but you don't show it.

You say,
"This is earth,
isn't it hot."
Oh Paris,
my love,

this is about as hot
as I'll ever get.

Polaroid

There is a picture
with my pants down,
and a fat,
drained slug
of a dick
in the centre.

It looks
brown
and sun burnt
as it lounges across my leg.

I try to remember that moment
with any kind of certainty,
but I struggle.

I'm pretty sure
that night
I came
on my girl's bra,
and she wasn't too happy
about it.

Or the way I asked her to
*"Take a photo of my dick,
while it's looking pretty big."*
I put all those Polaroid's
in an envelope
under my dead
grandfather's watch.

Now I think about it,
I remember that night pretty well.

I hope everyone can
forgive me.

pop

Tonight we made love silently,
as not to disturb a soul.
Our heavy drunk bodies slip together
in slow lazy thrusts.

After,
we lay beside each other
not saying anything,
just trying to catch our breath.

Outside, white snow
blankets the foreign streets of Europe
and a bitterly cold wind
makes our breath visible on the windows.

We write our names
with pink fingers
that leave opaque outlines on the glass.

I put D'Arne's toe in my mouth
and I tell her she is beautiful.

It comes out in a gargle.

Inside her eyes glint
with a childlike giddiness
I know oh so well,
and I know
she means it.

She asks me what I just wrote,
but I tell her it's not important.

And really,
it's not.

SOMETIMES

Sometimes I drive around town
with my dick in my hand.

Nothing perverted,
just outside my pants,
and smiling out the windscreen.

Giving it some air.

Because it gets lonely in dirty jeans
and he wants to see the world too.

Sometimes I wonder if that's a strange thing to do,
but it doesn't really matter
cause no one will ever see me
and I sure as shit
will never mention it
to *anyone*.

Foreskin

I push the end,
the tip,
of my foreskin
into the opening
of my beer bottle.

Of course it's a strange thing to do.

Especially when I take
my next sip.

Thinking,
my dick has been here.

Its skin
on the glass.

Like a bulldog on an ice cream.

My dick has been here.

It makes sense.

My mum won't let me buy a mouse
because she says they smell bad.
And
D'Arne is pretending to be sick.

It doesn't make sense.

Nothing makes sense.

That's why I do these silly things,
and tell you all about them.

There's No Way

Sit down,

I pat at the felt seat
beside me.

Pull up your skirt.

Show me your
Amazon thighs,
for the leg show.

Spill the wine
all over the floorboards.

Don't worry about it,
I'll clean it up
later
with a second wipe
of a gym sock.

There's no way,

no-way-Jose,

that we can
pull
back
now
I wanna keep my shirt on
just for a little while.

Until the blood in my body
warms up my skin
while it floods to the
purple tip of my dick.

My foot slips in the wine.
It's ambient
and
cold.

Even if one of us vomits
there is no way we could
pull
back
now.

Hail to the King, Baby

There is a row of rubbish bags
lining the hallway,
next to a bottle of apple juice
that we are trying to ferment
into wine.

I pick up a magazine
but he flicks it out of my hand.

"Believe me dude,
you don't want to look through
there.
I've been really lazy lately."

He tells me,
he can make it two times
in a row, without a break
in the shower.

Says the secret is conditioner.

Everyone has secrets.

Todd must have a very
soft dick.

NS4W

Good God,
I whisper
to myself,
there must be something happening here.

A revolution if you will.

A front line of terrifyingly
sexually liberated teenage women
with nothing on their minds
but the destruction of any
willing,
but gullible libido.

Armed with limp-wristed
self portraits,
bony backsides with seasoned
calves and
monstrous, heaving, screaming
tits.

Pouted lips and
doe-eyed despondence.

Rag and tag
and drunken
faux pas!

Oh good God, I whisper
to myself.

What chance do we stand?
What madness
and trickery
is this!

I can hear the Lolita
laughs.

The flaccid
and pale dicks of the elders,
swinging in the wind
by themselves.

I can hear their
fathers,
crying in the rooms
next door.

Good God, I whisper
to myself.
Before I'm old,
to be young again.

Chestnut

It sits there, from behind,
like the horizontal lips of a
water chestnut.

Animal in its rawness.

Red,
bloated,
hot to the touch.

The kind of snatch you would blow on –
with your breath I mean –
the kind of cunt you would
pat, like a hungry kitten.

A real
nail your balls to the wall
type of gash.

It lays there.
Together.
Warm and wet.

The rain sounds outside
like a vertical roar.
Pouring, cold,
and splashing on the floor.

The room smells like box.

I only have a regular sized dick,
but believe me sweethearts,

that chestnut got pumped.

Pronto

When I get home
I turn on the computer
and
curse my missus out
for closing the porno page
I was looking through.

I say,
“For fuck sake,
now I won’t know
where I was up to!”

As if I was reading *War And Peace*.

She says,
“I’m sure
you will be able to find it again.
It’s the page where she is pulling
purple beads out of her ass.”

I smile at her.

Then the computer.

It’s almost like I am
reading *War And Peace*.

FAN TASY

I think my ultimate fantasy
would be to dangle
my limp dick across a woman's face.

And like a tea bag,
drop it slowly into her opening,
red-lipped mouth.

I'd keep it in there
while she toyed with her junk.

She would have green nail polish on,
and it would dance
in her pink and purple
playground.

She would hum
and my dick would grow harder.

Moan,
and my shaft would expand.

Firmer.

Like those dinosaur toys
that expand in a glass of water.

Bigger. Chunkier.

Filling up her jaws.

Pushing out her cheeks,
like a blowfish.

Her teeth leaving imprints
on the foreskin.

Muffled and full.

**Until, finally, she would
be unable to maintain the load
and with a big**

“Phatttooie!”

she would throw her head back,
In an arch of spit
and bright glowing eyes.
While my dick bounced up and down
like a great rubber gong.

Shaving My Balls Pt.1

There has got to be something
therapeutic
about clipping away at your pubes.

Hacking through the vines.

Unearthing the pale
and wrinkly little man
who talks a whole heap of
piss.

Like *Indiana Jones*.

I tell my family
I'm going to have a shower
but I take a pair of scissors and
a cut-throat.

Half drunk
I saw away at my balls
and my guts just underneath
my "checkmate" tattoo.

Later that night
when we are watching telly
I get the most insane itching
on my crotch,
which ends with me in the
bathroom
spreading my dick

with hand cream
and hair conditioner.

A bottle of cider in one hand
and creamy chunks of
hair product
striped through the red
and blotchy
blisters of my groin.

Like a feather plucked
hen,
pink and white.

My penis is a pale pole
poking out from the mess,
like a cube of tofu.

Therapeutic, they say.

Beauty is pain.

Shaving My Balls Pt.2

The next day,
when the itch hadn't gone away.
I have to work as a tiler
with an old bloke from the pub.

In a house with two Indian blokes
who don't speak a single word of English.

All day I'm walking around
scratching away at my balls
with these two Indian fellas
speaking Punjabi.

I think the one with the bung eye
looked like he knew what was going on.
That maybe he had once
been in the same situation.

After work,
covered in dust,

I hop in the shower.

My mum walks in.

I stand there with a shiny
white pair of
10 year old scrotum
sacks.

It's awkward.

I knew this
was
a
bad
idea.

Some men
aren't mentally strong enough
to rock a shaven pair of
coconuts.

Shaving My Balls Pt.3

Can't stop.

Won't stop.

I type,

"I shaved my balls and
now they won't stop itching,"
into *askjeeves.com*.

I'm not alone
in this dilemma.

Many men have tried
and met
many ends.

Someone suggests
Vaseline.

I carry a chunky
tube around
in my work jeans
for a couple of days.

I'm so embarrassed.
This is a three poem epic,
about shaven testes.

I don't know
what's more embarrassing.

I'm a larger fool
than most give credit to.

In fact,
to tell you a secret,
these poems
were pretty much written
before I shaved my balls.

Think about that
for a minute.

Men really do
suffer for their art.

Boys, of course,
suffer slightly more.

Peppers Tits

I bet you looked,
didn't you?
At her pointy tits.

In the toilet
I hear this,
pop a beer,
laugh,
and slap the wall.

See!
I knew you would!

YES!
I scream,
of course I did!
The same as
you did!

She
is smart enough
to understand
the situation.

Cosmically.

Bow-legged,
on the floor.

A dress hem creeping from her thigh
and into the warmth of her
yawning,
blushing crotch.

My Bow-legged Baby

Undressed at the height,
breathing white clouds of smoke,
that settle around her lips
and hang heavily
with a dissipated weight
around her nipples.

Glowing grey,
in the awkward neon
of the porch light outside.

The staunch, black, outside.

The television hums in the other room,
just like it always does.

And I yell out the wire screen door
that the next few pages are for her,
as if they have ever been anyone else's.

Kiwi Fruit

D'Arne is a firm believer
that it's a lack of
exercise
that makes
a heavy period.

I have been bleeding
for months.

Like a scarlet
kiwi fruit.

Only out of my brain,
and into the Olivetti.

Out of my brain,
but still
from a dirty
old
cunt.

TRASH.

Travis Bickle
Taxi Driver (1976)

*“Shit... I’m waiting for the
sun to shine.”*

My First Book

My first book
went for sale at 30 bucks
a pop
at a joint that sells porn
in a semi-hippy part
of an overly yuppie town.

They took 4 copies
and
gave me a business card with
a few numbers that would
get my cash back
from the eventual sales.

If they all sold they would take
more.

The business card had
two girls rubbing each others'
pussies on the front.

He wrote my reference number
in blue pen
next to them.

Only one copy sold,
to a guy I know,
who rang me when
I was handing them in for sale.

30 bucks.

Next to paperbacks
and self-published
vanity chaps
that sit there
full of hate and aggression.

There used to be a television
in the corner of the store
that ran black and white porn flicks.

The police raided it
a few days before
I gave them my copies.

They took handcuffs
and
a book about Satan.

I wish they had been a few days later.
Maybe they would have taken
the remaining 3 books I had to sell,
and I could
make back the money
I owed the vanity press in the states.

The vanity press
that makes fun of hacks like me,
who think people give a fuck
about what we have to say.

Not a Crook

In the lounge room,
after taking a piss,
I throw my hands in the air
and make two peace signs.

I'm in the nude,
and I'm pretending to be
Richard Nixon.

I say,
inside my head,
"I am not a crook."

No one is home.

I'm alone,
but I still say it to myself,
inside my head.

With a short girth of skin
peeling from the black bush of
my pelvis.

I roll it between my palms.

I pick up my beer.

I am not a crook.
Just like he said it,
in that same voice,
but inside my head,

"I am not a crook."

Uncle Jimmy

I only saw him once,
or only once that I can remember.

Standing on the top of the stairs
in his brown underpants.

Smiling at me from all the way up there.

He died on the outside toilet
and now all the kids are scared
to go to the bathroom in the garden.

He was cremated
but my granddad,
his brother,
didn't have enough money to bury him.

So my uncle Tom
took his hand shovel
and my uncle Jimmy in a coffee tin
to the grave site
where my grandma was buried.

Uncle Tom dug just deep enough
to ensure
Jimmy was in the ground.

He told me that was the saddest time of his life.

His last bus ride
with his uncle Jimmy.

The Snowy Road

She sings along
to tunes
that the radio plays,
and runs her hand
across my lap
while the sun
paints the road,
till it looks like
we are driving on snow.

And the opening,
grey
clouds
that split above me
are envious
of us all,
and our journey that
will leave tracks
on the tarmac.

That for a little while there,
believed they were snow.

Stars on 45

My dad took my sister to Hollywood.

When he came home
he told me a story,
about the boulevard of stars.

He said,
*"We got our picture taken with Chewbacca
and when I was walking away
the hairy bloke kept getting in my face,
yelling at me
and scaring your sister."*

He even said from over the road,
with the other *Star Wars* stars
and movie vixens,
Chewbacca was running his hand
across his neck,
as if to say,
I'll cut open your throat.

So my dad went back to the hotel bar
and had a few beers...

My sister told me
it's 'cause Dad didn't
pay him.

I went to the hotel pub
and had a few beers...

You Creep

I wait in the car
while my dad
buys T-bone steaks.

I jump out and take a
long,
stinging
piss
on a concrete pylon.

A lady pushing a pram says,
"Pull up your pants,
you creep."

Everyone else is sober.

Everyone is happy.

I have stains on
my jeans
'cause that bitch
made me
pull up my pants
too
quick.

Every time she leaves me I watch the same
film,
but I'm always drunk, and I forget its name.

I just remember one song:
The Big Rock Candy Mountain,
where all the cops have wooden legs.

Leave Me

I piss a lot when I'm drunk,
so I walk
back and forth to the toilet.

I have dark azure stains
on my baby-blue briefs,
because I never shake my dick properly.

My mum says,
"No more beer Ben, please."

I say
"Don't worry, I won't be back in this room again
tonight."

But in my room,
under a light with purple lampshade
and under a rainbow-patterned Doona cover,
I cry like a little tattooed lamb.
The under-proof is like water.

I'm not allowed any more beers.

This is my life,
when you leave me.

Chicken Necks

A dude rocks up
to Tucker T's
with yellow cat's eyes contact lenses,
the kind that junkies wear
to nightclubs.

He tell us his mum's getting hassled
down at the caravan park.

He says it's getting ugly.

His dad sits in a pick-up
on the nature strip,
and smokes cigarettes
without looking at us.

We drive there,
park in the visitors section,
and walk behind the father and son.

His mum is standing on the front porch
in a dressing gown and Ugg boots.
She says she's sick with cancer
and doesn't want to be a bother
to anyone.

Her place is a shit tip.

A girl of about 15 holds onto a baby,
with the glowing cherry on her cigarette
lighting up the child's face
with every draw.

The guy with the cat's eyes starts yelling,
shouting about war
and burning down people's houses.

An old man with a cap and a few teeth
left in his mouth
says he works at an abattoir
and maybe,

as a peace offering of some kind,
offers Tucker and me a
plastic bag of
pink and scarlet
chicken necks.

He holds them up to our faces.
He's proud
but afraid.

We shuffle around and
the dad invites us over for dinner.
You know,
to say thanks.

For a roast, he says,
potatoes, lamb, you name it. Listen to the radio.

We drive home
without saying much. Watch a movie.

Sometimes
shit gets too real and not even
a bag of chicken necks
from the saddest man
in the history of the world,
or a roast with all the trimmings,
can make you forget it.

We went away that night
hoping to kick the shit
out of some evil bastards.

But the only dudes there
were me, Tucker T,
and a guy with cat's eyes
who didn't know any different.

Golfing

They cooked a steak
but it was too early for him to eat it,
or he went to bed early,
I'm not sure,
I wasn't there.

His sons tell me that
their dad
kept the steak in the front pocket of his jeans
for 18 holes of golf.

After the pub,
at home,
he tried to eat it before he went to bed,
but his missus cracked the shits.

And no meat
is worth that kind
of blue.

Father's Day

It's Father's Day,
and at the pub we sit
around telling stories
about our dads.

Rex is a drunk from
the missionary up the road,
says his daughter
will be here to pick him up soon.

She won't.

Denis says he's writing a book.
He's not.

Wants advice about self-publishing.

My dad puts a yellow fifty on the bench
and buys everyone a beer.

2 tables wide we sit,
grey and glasses
and old and dying.
Fathers and bastards,
and beer.

Sad, sad beer.
I buy another round.

Tell Denis I'm writing a book.

I'm not.

Sip at the sad beer.

I tell my dad I love him.

Happy
fucking
Father's
Day,
Dad.

Memories

We hang on to memories
by compartmentalizing
them
into twenty-word stories,
pre-set to be in conversation.

Remember that time

...at your place?

...with the Michael Jackson CDs?

...the guys smoking pot in the cubby house?

...all naked in the spa?

Don't you remember...

that time?

Then we laugh
like maniacs,
remembering.

Since 1 O'Clock

She looks at me,
then at the beer.

And in her eyes I see
a great sadness.

I say,

*"Please...
don't look at me like that."*

She replies
with a sigh,

*"You have been drinking
since 1 o'clock,*

I think you have had enough."

She goes to bed.

I make a point of it
to stay awake,
and quite literally
eat the label
from the beer bottle.

The whole thing,
piece
by
piece.

Enough To Drink

You should never tell a man
he's had too much to drink.

Because if you're telling him,
he probably has.

But
he'll still drink another
quarter bottle
of Scotch,
and shit in the cat's
water bowl,
to prove he hasn't.

Pfft, too much to drink.

I'll show you too much to drink.

It's Finished

In the orange kitchen,
he sits
rolling a joint.

His spit keeps making
the papers too wet,
and the filler
drops
like compost
into the china bowl.

I say,
*"Don't stress -
in the bigger scheme of things -
what's the rush?"*

He laughs.

I walk into the lounge room
and she puts dirty feet
on my lap.
2 caps of shrooms
float inside my head
like a pantomime.

Someone stands up
and pats the
stupid,
ugly
dog.

In delirium
I walk to and from the toilet
writing notes on
toilet paper.

I hear a cymbal crash
in the kitchen...

Ah, I think,
it's finally finished.

The Toilet

My white,
fish-lipped
dick
stares blankly
up at me.

I wipe the piss
from the floor
with toilet paper.

Then rip off a little more
to write this down on.

My piss is a poet.

It goes through more
shit than
I ever
will.

Bath Time

The lid of a fruit cup
splits the book in half,
as it sits on the toilet
beside the bath.

My girl dances
with her peach ass,
on top of thick thighs,
bouncing at the mirror.

People walk in
and out
and music blares
from the other rooms.

Six people
have been in this bath
before me.

Someone once said to me,
"I can't believe you bathe.
Don't you feel like
you're just stewing in
your own filth?"

I didn't answer,
but if I could now,
I'd say,
"No,
I much prefer stewing
in all
of
yours."

My Sister

We share slugs
from a bottle
of cough syrup,
wrapped
in a brown
paper bag.

And laugh
about the
silliness of
what we are doing.

It was always
like that.

Always and
never.

A wet keyboard and a telephone call I didn't want to hear about

In the morning
my keyboard sits
in a pool of liquid,
next to a couple
of empty beer bottles
and a DVD about Janis Joplin.

I pull it out
and drain it onto
a towel
that I have
laid on the floor.

It won't work any more
and I leave a
message on my blog,
that the site is closed
till I can get a new one.

I am a tosser like that.

I ring my woman
and tell her
I must have spilt some beer
before I passed out,
and now the computer
is all fucked up.

She asks me
if it smells like piss,
because the other night
I took a leak
in the wardrobe.

I laugh it off a bit.

Think it over.

Shit,
it sure as hell
doesn't smell like beer.

My Old Man's Mate

He walks in wearing an Akubra
and RM Williams chains.

Sees me typing
and asks
over the lid of his beer
if I'm working or writing.

I tell him neither,
and show him a suitcase
stuffed with letters.

I pretend they are fan mail.

His face goes red
and he says,
"Oh shit,
I think I just farted
in here."

He walks away backwards,
sticking out his butt
and rolling his hand
in a queen wave
by his rectum.

"I'll try and waft it up this way."

He shuffles away
with his beer and
his hat
and his fart smell,
back into the room
with my old man.

I go back
to searching the Internet
for porno
and screwing up my nose
at the remnants of ass-particles
left behind.

Fan mail.

You gotta be
fucking kidding me.

Annoying

My sister says,
“Ben these are annoying,”
and holds up a beer bottle cap.

It's shiny and red and has trivia
on the inside.

I pour a myself
a tea cup
full of stale wine and
tell them all
it's just water.

There are bottle caps in the bath water.
Behind the couch.
In the sink.
In the pockets
of everything I own.

Enough caps to make me jingle
when I walk.

Like I am Hansel and they
are the bread crumbs.

Not finding my way back home,
but taking me further away
from my bed.

Jane's Pancakes

Like a starfish
in a *Napoleon*
Dynamite
t-shirt
she says,

*"I know this sounds
fucked up,
but can you make me
pancakes
like Jane does?"*

Jane is my ex.
Works at a diner
on Kielor Rd.

I tell her she
is a poet.

She gets mad
and I say,

"Okay,
FUCK MAN!"

I'll go get pancakes!"

While I scramble
into my jeans
and pick up my car
keys,
she smiles and
hides under the
blanket.

*"Naw, it's okay.
I want scrambled eggs
like my pa makes."*

She stands up
and hugs me
while drumming at my back
like the hands
of an old friend.

Possom

Big Possum buys us a beer
and sits like a wombat
on a straining stool while he
tells us
he did his license.

The dogs got him
at the front of an Albanian
church.

He got out and when they
drew a pistol he
looked up at a big
luminous, glowing cross
and said,
*"Well thank
you
very much."*

The coppers laughed.

Possum coughs.

He wants me to take
his car home now,
but I'm drunker than he is.
My dad says we will drive
behind him and make sure
he gets home okay.

We leave him half way
home and I say,
*"Are you sure this is okay
Pop? He's pretty drunk."*

And he says,
"Yeah, but so are we."

In front of the pizza joint
kids wearing helmets
eat their pizza.

I say,
"Well thank you very much."

Homo sexuals

We get loaded and
see an old school
mate while we wait for
our fish and chips.

He is a big wog-looking
fella and shakes our hands.

We ramble some shit
about travelling Europe and
how we are both looking
for a house.

I can imagine,
in my head,
the things he says to
people who know
us
when he sees them next.

*“Oh, Ben and Nathan?
Yeah those guys are
hooked up now.
Look like they are taking
smack and travelling
Europe,
speaking some shit about
getting a house together.”*

His stories are
worth as much
as the handshake
he gave
us
to start
with.

Old Bloke Pt. 1

My phone rings.

It has an Elvis ring tone.

I look at the screen
and I know
it's a drunk bloke
I work with
at the factory.

I made a rule
never to answer the
phone
after 10:30.

Nothing good happens
after then.

It stops,
rings again,
leaves a message.

"Ben, it's the old fella.
He's in an ambulance."

Old drunk Bruce
and his son
with no one else to ring
but me.

The closest thing he
has
to a friend.

I delete the message.

It rings again.

I put it under a pillow
and Elvis is muffled:
*"Theres got to be birds
flying higher
in the sky
so blue".*

Nothing good happens
after 10:30.

Old Bloke Pt.2

I speak to his son
the next day
and ask what happened.

“He fell over the bed
and split his head open.
Then he broke a lamp.
Then he shit himself.
Then he went into a coma.”
He will be in there
for two weeks
or he won’t come out,”
he tells me.

Longest time
he’s been without a
beer.

I used to watch him
and think
only the strong can
live like that.

Non-stop,
continuously shaking his
fist in the face
of God.

Thinking he could live
forever,
like a hero.

Drunk and alone,
in cowboy boots,
forever.

Death and Doing It

One dude
in 1999,
after his mother
died,
found a man
on the Internet
who would let
him fuck and eat
him.

He was pinched with
forty-four pounds
of uncooked
human flesh
in his refrigerator.

We all deal with
death differently,
but
shit...

come on,
dude.

Olinda

I remember driving through the forest.

The trees like leaning green
and brown shores.

The road,
pitched on black wet asphalt
that
tailed through hermit-lined streets
with edges
like shopping trolley
wheels.

There was a cask of wine
in the centre of the road.

Silver and alone and empty and used.
Metallic against everything else that is
west and far from green.

No place between.

Who drinks in these places?

Who drinks alone in these woods?

Ferns with willows

settle under the canopy of police

trees

that offer marriage from the run-off

of their leaves.

Who drinks alone out here,

in this undignified human nuance?

The radio is out of place,

like the wine cask and my car.

I could drive for miles more but I

feel like the ghosts of this forest hate

me

and my stupid clothes

and my inability to know

who drinks on these roads.

A fog of old man grey
whispers around and hides the
earth under my wheels.

There's a solitude in being alone.
And the anxiety of someone coming.
As if at any moment
I will pass
and all my secrets with the woods
and the cask wine drinkers of the
forest
will die with me
in a head-on collision
with an out of place car
that might never come.

No distractions.
Nothing to look forward to.

With an ego that would offend
the hermits that pre-occupy this silent
space of ghosts and unheard falling trees.

If I ever make it through these roads
I promise myself to return
without the fear of losing my stories.

And smile desperately
into the oncoming lights
that will wash my face in the only
yellow light.

In this green
and cask wine metal world.

Moby Dicks

"A whale is like heaven, dude,"

he tells me on the lawn

in his socks,

with a joint

in the corner

of his

mouth.

"They are huge man,

absolutely huge.

Always making this sound,"

as he continues to make the
sound of a tuning fork
mixed with a gun echo.

*“Whales, man,
they are
like I imagine
Heaven.”*

I agree with
a flick of my chin and take
back the L.

He's had enough.

Caravan

The budgies squawk
in little wire cages.

They dance in front of the mirror and
Lucky,
he sings.

Johnny gives me a beer.

His wife Barb
reads
in the other room.

We talk about racing.

He shows me the ad in the paper,
advertising weekend tiling jobs.

He says,

"I lost 300 this weekend."

Barry comes in on his cane.

They only put up with him

so maybe they

might have a look in on his will.

I have heartburn from the

froth in this cheap,

shit

beer.

But I feel sick from everything else,

an eternal headache that will never
go away.

He pulls out the bird and

it bites his hand.

We sit in silence and drink.

This world

is a poet,

and birds in cages should never
be called lucky.

