



<http://www.horrorsleazetrash.com>



**flows like water**  
**J.J. Campbell**

i had a friend tell me  
years ago, if i was serious  
about suicide i should write  
the note in blood

this is what happens when  
the gin flows like water

old girlfriends have nothing  
but evil dripping out of  
their eyes

dead grandparents start  
telling stories from the  
great depression

the old poets will make  
you understand what  
heartbreak really is

and your lady of the night

her lips will taste like  
what hope used to be

you feign choking on  
your own brilliance

an old trick learned  
back when your ego  
was still unbreakable

now that fucker is riddled  
with so many bullets the  
alcohol never stays in

put up a good fight  
and never forget

you always have an irish  
goodbye tucked in your  
back pocket

**Scrubbing the Toilet at 6 AM**  
**Joseph Farley**

Cleaning up the mess  
left behind  
by someone,  
possibly even me.  
It's hard to remember  
what happens  
in the strangeness  
of night.

I take my time,  
make porcelain shine,  
while doing what must  
be done,  
putting all the new ideas  
that arrive in my head  
into the movements  
of the brush.

It is all art  
if you want to see it  
that way,  
everything you do.  
Same as with  
the old monks  
who viewed  
all actions  
as a form of prayer.

The results from  
this morning's efforts  
may be as good  
or better  
than anything else  
I have done  
or could possibly do,  
and I may have  
saved the world  
in the process  
without ever  
meaning to.

**A sex poem**  
**G. Arthur Brown**

You get me as hard as poetry  
Not that poetry gives me an erection  
But poetry is difficult  
That's a play on words I think

I get you all wet like a washed-up comedian  
Except, one that's all dirty  
I read an article about yeast infections  
So I'll try to remember to wash my hands

One guy I know ate buffalo wings and then fingered his girlfriend  
It was not a relationship-building experience  
The best relationship I was in was probably still a nightmare  
for most people  
The sex was good but you wouldn't make a movie about it  
If you did make a movie about it it would be an awkward indie film  
Starring Philip Seymour Hoffman  
As a rich grandmother in a Catholic dystopia

But I digress  
I want to fuck you, so bad  
The sex would not be bad but the desire is  
The sex would not be bad the third time, I mean  
The first two might be fumbling and unfulfilling  
If you judge me based on the first or second time  
that we fuck then fuck you  
It's the third time that clinches the thing  
If the third time's bad then that's real  
That would be a mistake  
Like the third time I fucked your mom  
The first two could be chalked up to being drunk  
The third time I hadn't even sipped a beer  
I'd rather fuck you than your mom  
I'm sorry

We played Dungeons & Dragons too, me and your mom  
She would literally be perfect if the sex worked  
And she wasn't hooked up to that machine

You are like the perfect version of your mom  
No machine  
You can learn D&D  
Let's find out if the sex works

Yeah, I know I'm old enough to be your father  
But I like to think of myself as your dad's cool friend  
And yes, I did fuck your mom about twenty-two years ago  
But I'll take a paternity test, I'm not scared  
You know your dad  
He's an asshole  
He did not want me fucking your mom  
Not even once let alone three times  
Forget about that loser  
I'm not him

Come on already  
Let's fuck

**Pavlovian  
Kristin Garth**

When you write to me “darlin” I run a bath,  
scalding and scented, flesh perfumed, punished  
on your behalf. Far away masters have  
local effects between the shorn sluttish  
succulent lips and the cervix. You saturate  
me on the inside. This flesh arid, clothed  
is duplicitous pride you would berate  
if you could see. I am a beast you exposed  
obsessively until I learned to spurn  
humanity myself, to proffer pink skin,  
a wet wishing well. Conditioned to yearn,  
wait my turn until summoned again,  
with a prim presentation playing pretend —  
just a trained animal, Pavlovian.

**Darkness Light  
Willie Smith**

Dad didn’t teach me shit.  
Except how to wipe my ass,  
how to throw a rock, drive a nail  
and tell a Phillips from that other kind of screw.  
Dad prized his couple dozen LP’s of symphonies,  
symphonic poems, opera picks.  
On the leadup to his nightly soak,  
he would shake the house  
with – cranked – the New World Symphony,  
rattle the windows with the Ride of the Valkyries,  
clatter the crockery with Caruso arias.  
My earliest memory is:  
in the living room, fantasy sword fighting  
to the Romeo and Juliet Overture;  
then hiding in my bedroom closet  
when the music ceased, and Dad,  
through wolfing his pint,  
rampaged through the house slamming doors,  
punching holes in walls, kicking the dog,  
screaming obscenities, curses, damnations,  
threatening my mother with divorce,  
to see how she liked being penniless  
without his daytime breadwinning skills.  
Had Dad left the vodka alone,  
and done everything else about the same,  
I might have come to respect him as much  
as the music he so diligently,  
if accidentally, inspired me to love.  
The ogre, as it was, scared me nuts till age twelve;  
after which, when I began finding bottles  
all over the house, and I grew taller than him,  
I hated the son of a bitch’s bastard.  
Ever since he croaked,  
over twenty years ago,  
and I put on the Brahms, the Vivaldi, the Bach,  
and I hear the mad old fuck’s rising anger sing,  
I thank him, from the bottom of my wretched heart,  
for all the light into my life he cast.

**Nietzsche**  
**Noel Negele**

You think of Nietzsche  
that famous dour profile of his,  
like a man appearing angered  
as if someone owes him money  
some time now and he's just seen them  
walking around with new sneakers on  
or something,  
and you think of him in his later years  
getting bitterer and bitterer  
and lonelier and lonelier still  
as he lost work left and right  
and you think of him walking home  
cloaked in failure, with dark dark thoughts  
just tap dancing their way through his head  
and as Aurelius said:  
Your thoughts paint  
the color of your soul

And you think of Nietzsche's soul  
how black it must have been in that  
cold German weather —  
and you think if only he'd got some good pussy  
every now and then, not saying a lot,  
or if that cunt in high school  
hadn't broke his heart  
or if Salome, a woman he instantly fell in all with  
upon seeing for the first time in Paris,  
which sounds dumb when you think  
he's supposed to be a genius or something,  
she'd agree to become his wife,  
and take that bitterness off his shoulders  
with a hot meal every night

And maybe, if she gorged on his balls  
and shoved his dick so far down her throat  
her eyes would go crossed  
And maybe, if at night  
she'd caress his tormented brow  
and whisper in the darkness of their room  
that her precious Friedr was respected  
and appreciated though not fully understood  
for his unparalleled genius, and that  
she loved him and that she would  
always be there for him  
and that next time he went down on her  
he'd better have his mustache  
combed upwards

Or whatever they said back in those times  
But then again, who was he of all people  
to land an angel like that

**The Unlucky**  
**Dustin King**

I smoke my last one,  
“the lucky” as they call it,  
in St. Louis or Louisville,  
these Midwest towns that share names,  
landscape in between unchanging,  
cornstalks as tight as a fresh pack,  
plastic ripped off.

Rivers converge, widen.  
Oceanless, no coast even close,  
they don't know which way to flow.

You lit my cigarette in  
the back of Chez Charlie's  
on a Wednesday like  
the start of any good romance.  
Why did you have to quit?  
We played a game —  
I'd hide it from you, I'd lie.  
You'd notice me ashing  
my pen at my desk,  
say you knew I missed it.

Blow smoke up my ass,  
I blow smoke in your face,  
and so on.

I snuck out of the house.  
From inside you read  
the messages written in cinder,  
a wayward drill across metallic night.  
We doused it all in lighter fluid,  
watched it fume across the moon.

Now I'm heading back east,  
these final few drags like  
you're hitting the good spot,  
cherry to filter like you come too fast.

**Homesick**  
**Dave Cullern**

there's no kids left in the parking lot  
no hidden porn in the woods  
no stolen kisses beneath the wooden roof  
of the playgrounds lonely slide

there's no mistakes which need to be lived with  
no gum to drown out old cigarettes  
no pretend friends sleepovers  
covering up for dangerous nights

there's no circus to run away with  
no vans waiting at the gates  
no threats to the spaces of safety  
where the playing is played for free

there's no chance of getting lost here  
no judgement, no curses,  
no questions left to ask,  
no unknown facts

there's no fuck ups, no fights  
nothing much left to hide  
from past generations,  
whose ugliness is seen through ironic eyes

there's no dirty floors left on the high street  
no art left on the walls  
no home made bombs to wow whispering parents  
from their easy chairs

there's no sex  
there's no hate  
there's no fire  
there's no pain  
there's no need for excuses  
when nothing's left out  
in the rain

**My Kids Wanna Know Why I Have  
a Metal Pipe Next to my Bed  
Donna Dallas**

I like shiny things  
I love the cold smooth surface  
of this three-foot pewter toned  
steel goliath  
people have different things next to their bed  
like a book  
crucifix  
perhaps a vibrator

Me, a pipe  
I don't wanna bust their bubbles  
as we safely sit  
under this cathedral ceiling  
in our five thousand square foot space  
lined with trees  
and pruned bushes  
when the doors or windows open  
our alarm announces  
*front door open...patio door ajar...*  
technology is wondrous these days

But the pipe...  
goes back to  
growing up in Queens  
the back of our home adjacent  
to the schoolyard  
the crackies finding  
their way into our basement  
to steal tools  
or shimmy into the kitchen door  
the many strange men  
our mother tried to rescue  
reform  
salvage  
who wandered around  
with a menace in their eyes  
that kept us awake for years

When shit went south  
as it always did  
just never knew  
what you would wake up to  
Mom in a pool of vomit  
piss on the floor  
two or three "friends"  
seated at the table  
sprinkling lines  
Jack and coke  
a cig burning the formica  
someone sitting in the torn up  
brown chair  
staring into space  
sweats  
low mumbles  
night tremors  
or when someone  
threatening  
would blow out a windowpane

Many times  
when 911  
took too long  
we had no choice  
either swing or die

**Andre Breton's Massage Parlor**  
**John Knoll**

The Head of a Hungry Man

In my favorite massage parlor  
Almost Heaven  
a razor sharp pendulum  
swings above my neck  
Riding me  
like a Texas cowgirl  
a hooded prostitute  
takes it slow and easy  
tantalizing slow  
excruciatingly slow  
the pendulum drops

Timed perfectly with my orgasm  
the pendulum stops an inch from my jugular  
If I desire to have the pendulum tickle my  
neck with a hint of blood the price  
goes up which just makes sense  
If I want to die having an orgasm  
it can be arranged and I'll be a  
life time member of the Suicide Club

The pendulum severs my head  
blood splatters the prostitute's face  
I stagger around the mirrored room  
look in a mirror my head is still there

I give the temple prostitute a reverent tip  
drive home to an empty farmhouse  
next to a corn field  
Before slipping into bed  
I turn my dead wife's picture to the wall  
The house will burn to the ground tomorrow  
luckily I wasn't home at the time

When I awake in the morning  
and look in the bathroom mirror  
my head's reflection is not there  
My wife runs from our burning farmhouse  
shouting "Surrealista Surrealista  
get thee away from me"  
I hold my head in my hands  
run away from the flames  
down a dead end street  
named Camino sin Nombre

.....  
I am the Prostitute  
The lover  
The john  
A gazelle  
The taste of skin  
Made of tree



**Today**  
**Nadja Moore**

I hated today.  
Today was a gnawing cloud  
spreading its legs on the table  
with its shoes on.  
A dull headache.  
A burning sensation in the eyeballs  
when exposed to the light.  
An angry outburst when the tampon  
isn't expelled from the tube.  
It was the Hulk if the Hulk  
was on his period.  
  
Still.  
  
Everybody else does it.  
  
I can too.  
  
Just not before damning the happy couple  
tonguing each other on the park bench first.

**Loiterer**  
**Rob Plath**

i have yet to love where i live  
almost 52  
& never been really home  
five decades of lostness  
the wine helped  
i looked thru dark red lenses  
& felt better  
but i was still a stranger  
w/ out a real home  
i often felt like i was loitering  
in my own room  
wherever it was  
as a boy i'd walk the streets  
looking in windows  
everyone else seemed home  
pushed in at brown tables  
reclining in green chairs  
standing at the sink  
holding up a yellow plate  
when i got older i'd gaze  
at paintings of cafes  
& the patrons seemed more  
at home than i ever was  
i'd look in hotel lobbies  
in vestibules  
into plate glass windows  
full of beads of rain  
like i had a thousand eyes  
but nothing  
who put me here?  
why?  
even my mother's golden kitchen  
didn't quite seem right  
all those rooms & people  
& walls & beams  
& doors & sinks  
yet no home

tonight i cross my legs  
in this strange bed  
in this strange room  
on this strange avenue  
in this strange town  
& think the graveyards i stroll in  
feel more like home  
the starlight feels more like home  
the bluebirds feel more like home  
& you, goddamn it, you,  
wherever the hell you are

**Poets Out of Service**  
**Michael Lee Johnson**

Like a full-service gas station  
or postal service workers  
displaced, racing to Staples retail  
for employment against the rules of labor,  
poets are out of business nowadays, you know.  
Who carries a loose change in their pockets?  
Who tosses loose coins in their car ashtray anymore?  
iPhones, smartphones, life is a video camera  
ready to shoot, destroy, and expose.  
No one reads poets anymore.  
No one thumbs through the yellow pages anymore.  
Who has sex in the back seat of their car anymore,  
just naked shots passed around online?  
Streetwalkers, bleach blonde whores,  
cosmetic plastic altered faces in the neon night;  
they don't bother to pick pennies  
or quarters off the streets anymore.  
The days of surprise candy bags for a nickel  
pennies lying on the countertop for  
Tar Babies, Strawberry Licorice Laces  
(2 for a penny), Wax Lips, Pixie Sticks,  
Good & Plenty are no more.  
Everyone is a dead-end player; he dies with time.  
Monster technology destroys crump fragments of culture.  
Old age is a passive slut; engaging old age  
conversations idle to a whisper and sleep alone.  
Matchbox, hand-rolled cigarettes,  
serrated, slimmed down, and gone.  
Time is a broken stopwatch gone by.  
Life is a defunct full-service gas station.  
Poets are out of business nowadays.

**Playing the Actor**  
**Daniel S. Irwin**

Playing the actor,  
I once tried Shakespeare.  
That amounted to  
Throwing myself to the  
Elizabethan wolves.  
*Monty Python*, it was not.  
I guess they understood  
That crap way back when  
They chugged ale and wine  
And pissed in the Thames.  
Oh, right, they still do that.  
For myself, I'm more of an  
"Intercourse the parrot"  
Kind of guy. Clearly a  
Product of our times.  
Italian opera could have  
Been my forte. But, I  
Don't sing all that well and  
My Italian is doubly severely  
Limited to random syllables.  
Which invariably causes the  
Rest of the cast to turn and  
Stare daggers at me when  
I open my mouth...but,  
Happily, most of the audience  
Doesn't speak Italian either  
And just assumes I'm the  
Bad guy everyone hates.  
Somehow, I managed two  
Performances before being  
Cast out with very colorful,  
Seemingly angry words,  
Which, of course, I didn't  
Understand. It was the  
Accompanying gestures that  
Made my expulsion acutely clear.  
That much Italian, *io capisco*.

**Just to Keep Him Happy**  
**John D Robinson**

'He asked me to wank him  
whilst I breast-fed  
our baby daughter.  
I found it disgusting but  
he wouldn't stop asking,  
so I did it,  
just to keep him happy.  
It wasn't nice for me,  
but I love him and I know  
that he sees other women,  
he tells me, brags of it,  
I know he uses me and  
I can't tell you of the pain  
when he fucked my ass!  
I asked him to stop,  
maybe three or four times,  
but he said he couldn't stop  
and carried on; I felt so dirty  
and self-disgusted.  
It's been four months  
since I saw him last,  
he may be dead, murdered  
by a jealous husband!  
I hope so,' she said,  
lifting her little girl  
to kiss and stroke her  
soft and beautiful face.

**The Solution**  
**Arthur Graham**

According to chemistry  
alcohol is a solution  
at least it is until  
oh boy is it not

My liver throbs  
beneath my ribs  
coming one sip closer  
closer to the holy solution

The ancients called these spirits  
in their ardent belief that  
the booze brought them  
closer to the gods

Hades I suppose  
though no one back then  
ever lived long enough  
to get cancer

Reading the dregs at  
the bottom of my glass  
like some fool barstool  
oracle of Delphi

## B U R N

C. Renee Kiser

I fell in love with a con man  
He conned me outta some smiles  
and a few flighty years  
but  
a storyteller never allows a single smile  
to go to waste  
He tried to steal my spine  
cause he didn't have his own  
I thought I heard him roar once  
Turns out,  
it was just the television  
He's got fire in his birth chart –  
a flirty, flaunting Leo is a good time  
But this particular would-be king  
is fueled by some quite  
misguided  
passion – that tiny  
jawbreaker heart  
on fire  
destroys everything in its path  
like a bowling ball knocking down  
the girls  
blazing down the alley  
with a passive aggressive ball drop  
Ha!

And a cowardly lion is no match  
for me  
I was born year of the dragon  
so  
My soul came prepared  
but thanks for the story, man  
I am grateful for every lie, every smirk,  
every knife in my back,  
every spine-stealing intention that I easily  
dodged  
I will use it all wisely  
The Devil can only hold the power  
we give away  
freely

He gonna learn now  
about that four-letter word  
that he loves so much  
And I wonder, then  
will he take the time out  
to look through his inner  
child's eyes  
at the wonder of the  
boomerang

**eternal love and fruit flies**  
**Bogdan Dragos**

Sunny day outside  
streets full of people  
seeking water  
and cold beers

Overcast day inside  
the cold, rough walls  
of the basement  
in the abandoned building

She slaps his forehead  
with a sloppy hand  
soaked in vomit

“Ouch!” he cries

And she says, “I can’t stand  
these fucking fruit flies.  
Why must they follow  
everywhere we go?”

He turns around  
upon the wool blanket and  
shoves away some empty  
bottles of cheap wine and  
drops his head into  
her naked lap

“Because, baby, we’re putrid.  
You and I, we’re both dead  
on the inside and out.  
And the fruit flies  
love the smell  
and taste of our bodies.  
Especially when they come  
together and sweat a lot.”

He grabs her upper thigh  
and his finger tap playfully  
along the piano-key-like  
cut marks that adorn it  
from crotch to knee

She tries to squash  
a fruit fly on his back

Fails  
Gives up

Drifts into sobs and cries

“Noo, don’t cry,” he says

“Darling,” she says  
through sour tears  
that are immediately  
assaulted by fruit flies,  
“are we really dead?”

“Yeah,” he says  
after two full minutes  
of struggling to open his eyes  
“Dead to them all who walk  
outside in the warm sun  
and go to jobs to feed families,  
and dead to our own families.  
And to God. We’re dead, alright.”

She wails and flails  
her vomit-soaked hands  
to chase away  
the fruit flies

Achieves the opposite effect

Wails some more

Looks around for  
her favorite razor blade

Doesn't find it

Wails some more

Grabs a bottle and swings  
it back against the wall  
but not hard enough  
to break it

Just drops it instead

And she wails some more

Until he grabs her hand  
and holds it to his face  
and starts licking and  
sucking on her fingers

It tastes not very different  
from the wine they'd drank  
so he keeps sucking,  
telling her, "Don't worry."

"What?" she asks

"Don't worry, I said.  
Even if we're dead, at least  
we're dead together. And that's  
a thousand billion times better  
than being alive and apart.  
We're still better off than those  
who walk outside in the sun.  
Those fools stay together till  
death does 'em apart. Pathetic."

"What do you mean?" she asks

"We're staying together  
in death itself, my dear.  
Our love is eternal!  
We've got each other  
and our cool basement grave  
and our fruit fly children  
to help keep us company  
and the sweet nectar  
of each other's bodies.  
What else could one ask for,  
in life or in death?"

"Awww, you sweet-talking  
failure of a poet, come here  
and kiss me!"

He did

And not even the vomit  
or the coughing of blood  
could break their lips apart

Even the fruit flies  
joined in

While outside,  
people still walked  
in the warmth of the sun,  
oblivious to what true  
love looked like