



<http://www.horrorsleazetrash.com>



**Exit Strategy**  
**C. Renee Kiser**

Fade the maze-daze blues  
Paid my rat race dues

Impulses i've calmed  
late,  
*and collected-*  
mixed bag of nuts  
from the men who dared  
test  
*my crazy*

Toss it down  
the highest staircase  
my short legs can climb  
Feel the burn  
Have a laugh  
Take a bow  
Tumble away, *my darlings*

Snap out of it  
Pager buzzing in your pocket  
Table is ready-  
the new you is waiting  
Your memory must be erased  
*again* and your wig is crooked  
A tequila sunrise will set you straight

Now,  
take the elevator back down,  
*you dumb bitch*

**A Dish Served Cold**  
**Rp Verlaine**

Again she does  
the things I once  
found cute  
at a party  
for friends we  
still share at a distance  
close enough to register  
wounds deep and unkind.

Her smile that shifts  
by degrees to look  
at me with a sweet sweetness  
She could be a cat burglar  
with knives for claws  
slicing your heart.

A push up bra is an evil  
trick but she wears it  
to ready effect with  
A blouse wide open  
as if she was the star  
of an orgy.

I can't help but stare.

Her tongue licking the  
knife while eating cake  
is an old move  
but she does it  
far slower than before.  
By the end of the dinner  
every man has an erection  
and several her phone number.  
While all the women, even her  
best friend, want to kill her.

She kisses me on cheek  
bites it slightly  
A final turn on as I  
get up to leave.  
I hate you she whispers  
I know I say as I head  
for the door.

**No Promises**  
**Joseph Farley**

I can make you no promises that I can keep.  
In a moment of need I'll say anything.

Tomorrow. Tomorrow. That's easiest to say.  
Just put off any thought that might interfere  
with the matter at hand.

With luck one of us will forget what was said,  
or what was asked, most likely me,  
but you could forget as well.

That depends on luck, or what we were drinking.  
Neither is a sound reason for a bet.

I should keep all my promises, all of them,  
in a box in the garage, hidden in plain sight

along with the old car tires, the broken lawnmower,  
and the hundred pound bag of road salt  
kept for rare days when it snows.

That's the only way I can keep a promise,  
but it would involve too much writing  
and rearranging the existing mess in the garage.

It would be better for both of us if I made no promises,  
and you never tried to force me into being a liar.

This is a good night for what we are now.  
Don't say anything about tomorrow or the day after.

Such words would jinx the moment,  
and we only have so many moments.  
Maybe we need a box to save them in as well.

**a punch to the dick**  
**J.J. Campbell**

these are the nights that apathy tastes  
like the first time your grandmother  
gave you a sip of gin

the poison that would run through  
your veins the rest of your life

yet watching the woman of your dreams  
walk away haunts every dream

each step a punch to the dick

trying to pen the perfect poem at three  
in the morning while needing to take  
a shit in some sleazy motel  
in the middle of nowhere

the poet never gets the girl

only gets to listen to the stories of the  
popular fucks and turn them into the  
assholes they deserve to be

look out your window and watch a cat  
chase a bird as a butterfly chokes on  
a hazy summer nightmare

there once was promise in those skies

now, you only think about how soon  
does death greet you in the middle  
of the night

another glass of gin

you've been preparing for this  
all your life

**When You Don't Know The Why or The Way of It**  
**James Diaz**

Listen  
how the wind tail-ends  
across the rivets  
of the George Washington  
how there is so much more of everything  
underneath all of this

a child crosses her heart and hopes to try  
and remember these things  
that no one else can see

and pain will replace it  
we know this  
but there is a sweet spot  
between then and now  
hovering like god's own  
across the water

we are not so great, you and I  
but we are sturdy  
at times  
do the right thing  
mostly  
by accident  
time and place  
rhythm and swarm

in spring  
the earth pulses  
with it  
and winter will replace it  
we know this  
but for now there's a wild blooming  
things are born and torn

the prayers you say in the morning  
are always easier than the ones  
you say at night

**Pronto**  
**Jay Passer**

nothing like a new war  
to scintillate your porno

dialing between stations  
the radio between my ears

taking to your wily fingertips  
in urgent advertisement

for friendly flag-waving  
fascist import agencies

I know the drinks are stronger  
than smoke in surround sound

elevating our mutual mirage  
in a strong-armed sweaty clench

nothing like a slice  
of brains and sphincter

delivered pronto  
to your foxhole

**Toasting the French Symbolists with Phony Absinthe  
at Vesuvio's on Columbus  
Jay Passer**

I hate poets, I said.  
why do you write poetry then, she asked.  
because I'm one of a kind, I said.  
what about the Beats, she asked, what about Emily Dickinson.  
you want Chinese? I asked. Yee's is good, and cheap.  
you said you idolized e.e. cummings, she said,  
when you were in high school.  
I'd rather talk to a painter any day, I said. poets are filthy animals.  
but one of a kind, she inclined, like from Noah's Ark.  
don't be funny, I said. let's have a toast.  
why's this stuff green, anyway, she asked.  
the leaky brain of Verlaine, I said, with a hotshot of Rimbaud.  
how about some pasta, she said, how about Little Joe's.  
I'd commit suicide, I said, if I could afford to.  
you could jump off the Golden Gate, she offered.  
but that would tarnish my renown, I pointed out, as a maverick.  
I guess it's easier than getting a job, she said.  
fuck the police, I said.  
speaking of, she said, how're we gonna pay for this.  
toilets don't clean themselves, I said.

**Black Stockings  
Jay Maria Simpson**

I bend over backwards for you  
dressed in black stockings and ginger wine  
gymnast  
dancer  
who plays Chopin on your seductive  
grand piano

YOU SAY

You love my suppleness  
my gracefulness  
the way that I expose my self  
mind  
slippery soul  
silence  
mania

YOU SAY

You love how I show myself  
to the night  
under the  
drunken  
stars

I TREMBLE

you climb into the shower with me  
your dark eyes staring me down  
you suck my nipples and make them sing  
you erection breaks free inside of me

lather me  
fall to your knees  
understand

**the father and I are one**  
**Bogdan Dragos**

She got very deep  
into spirituality  
at her mother's  
sound advice

A lot of people,  
including her mother,  
got into spirituality  
as a means to calm  
the feeling of having  
no control over life  
whatsoever

But behold,  
there are those who  
go through spirituality  
and come out knowing  
that it none of it's true  
Suddenly they know  
and understand we have  
one hundred percent control  
over our own destinies

Today she was one  
of those people

"It's all a matter of  
how we manage our  
thoughts," she said  
"How we organize  
our minds. You attract  
what you focus on  
most of the time.  
It's that simple."

The guys at the bar all  
nodded, each hoping  
to get some private  
lessons out of her

And one of them did

He took her to his place  
where he found out that  
she was on her period

And she used her dead father's  
severed thumb as a tampon

"Indeed," she said  
as she put it back in  
"I and the father are one.  
He had created me  
in his image and  
I am a part of him.  
I am therefore never apart  
from him and he is never  
apart from me.  
Oh, young soul,  
please brace yourself.  
There is so much I have  
to teach you."

He got into the lotus position  
beside her and listened  
There was nothing  
else to do

**Some Men Who Have Paid To See You Nude**  
**Kristin Garth**

include rock stars, a priest in clerical  
collar, serial killer when he still had  
at least twenty dollars & compensable  
labor outside of death row, a sad  
ex-FBI agent turned lawyer turned strip  
club owner turned Clyde while Bonnie shot cops  
popping up through a sun roof window, golf trip  
titans with vacation condos they bought  
to fill with small town rented pussy explored  
spread wide on granite kitchen islands —  
at least that was their thoughts that pour  
into your ears in the VIP, man  
addicted to speed who runs a pharmacy,  
two psychologists who'd shrink you for free.

**Bunny Nightlight**  
**Kristin Garth**

Still seems innocent on the wrong side of  
the screen, wan smile some degenerate broke  
of a child beauty queen. Refracted love,  
filtered in pink, bottom lip quiver bespoke  
or rose colored wink dependent upon  
her audience tonight. Is she a good girl  
in obsidian, bad one in white, fawn  
or predator camouflaged in digital  
peonies, pine trees, backstory by  
Ovid, quotations of Sophocles?  
Most cannot decipher mirror image lies  
she scribbles in notebooks the naive  
fantasize to be pleas or private invites.  
Shows scars to strangers by bunny nightlight.

**Clawing through shadows**  
**Rp Verlaine**

of dreams  
to find her again  
real as a reflection

water trades  
for depth when touching  
only the ephemeral

her words, false  
as a pawned ring claiming  
absent ghosts in stolen  
photographs

I miss the outlaw  
she was before  
escaping the noose  
of excitement's gallows,  
induced by narcotic  
entanglement

she is now  
like the others,  
safe

it is her victory  
I do not begrudge,  
or misinterpret  
and nearly accept  
as I will  
her wedding invitation

for only dreams  
bring her former lives to me  
Most nights  
it's all I see  
when my eyes,  
starved for magic,  
close without it

**Movement and Play**  
**Noah David Roberts**

*Will you write a poem about me,  
I want to be a muse*

I move through desecrated boneyards  
through empty vessels

I move through the memory  
of time and what time is,

the burden of healing is upon me  
and only me, generations of

*will you write a poem about me,  
I want to be a muse*

cast upon the month of April  
cast upon the sea

cast upon the water, dark water  
which seems to be the whole world,

wearing nothing but a kimono  
in dim thunderstorm evening,

I move through deserted cobblestone  
move through drunken alleys,

move through play and ropes,  
move through nurses and klonopin,

move through eternity with one eyeball  
locked upon the sunlight

casting shadows upon darkness,  
*I want to be a muse*

*will you write a poem about me?*



**What the Woman in the Porn Video  
Was Actually Thinking About**  
**Eric Lawson**

She promised herself otherwise.  
But here she was yet again.  
Riding his cock, daydreaming.

She keeps a calm, steady rhythm.  
It just has to last longer tonight.  
Body heat fades fast in February.

She kept her 'librarian' glasses on.  
Lost in the animal groping  
and the hungry licking of sex.

Why was she still with this clown?  
How did he stay hard for so long?  
As always, the swirling questions  
came much sooner than she did.  
He always had whiskey somehow.  
What the hell did he do for money?

In the sweet surrender motion,  
her breasts felt weightless.  
Her worries, forgotten.

She was tired of endlessly shopping.  
Shopping for cock, for arm candy.  
She pined for quilted blankets, heat,  
a good mystery book, and whiskey.

As he spasmed beneath her,  
panting a lackluster "oh my god,"  
she soon realized that religion  
had failed her completely.  
As she never evolved from  
being a Pavlovian whore  
for a devil-may-care smile  
and whomever spoke poetic  
whiskey soaked words at her  
across the bar parking lot  
in the frigid February night.

This was love's lukewarm leftovers.  
And she would clutch them closely.  
No matter how bleak the forecast.  
She promised herself otherwise.

**Ranting as the Clock Strikes Three**  
**John Tustin**

It's another night where it's too hot  
But not so hot that I can comfortably  
Sleep naked  
So I don't sleep and the fan overhead  
Whispers almost imperceptibly  
*Whir whir whir whir whir*

Tomorrow will be another morning  
With either the sun like a cudgel  
Coming down on my body  
Or the rain an endless rasp of tears  
Crying down to the oblivious earth  
Or, worst of all, both alternating

Sometimes I think no one wants me  
Sometimes I can't be alone enough  
Sometimes I wonder when they'll come  
To get me  
And now I can hear them trying to get  
Deep inside

They're in they're in  
I feel like they've gotten in

They're going to kill me because they think  
I know too much  
And I want to die  
Because I think I know nothing

I'm floating in the river of shit  
I feel right at home

I'm falling asleep

**Only Sleeping**  
**Daniel S. Irwin**

He is not dead.  
He is only sleeping.  
That's why he hates it  
When the cat wakes  
Him up by pushing  
Its ass into his face.  
Varmint! Good thing  
He doesn't sleep with  
His tongue hanging out.  
Sometimes he does  
If he's really zonked.  
The usual story of a  
Life of disappointment.  
Bad women and good booze.  
Or was it/is it/could it be  
Good women and bad booze?  
The only time he got the two matched  
Was bad women and bad booze  
Amounting to kicks to the head  
And mornings full of sorrow.  
Good women and good booze  
Was only at church communion.  
But heathens don't go there  
And ain't no Flowers of the Altar  
Come to save him from himself.  
It's the Devil's life and the Devil's plan.  
He's nothin' more than a mortal man.

**A Most Disgusting Poem: Homage to Sixto Diaz Rodriguez  
Sherry Shahan**

I've written in every kind of pleasure dome  
I've scrawled in bowling alleys, biker dives  
Dance halls, strip bars, old folks' homes.  
All the times I've hummed requiems  
The same lines, rhymes, sooty impromptus.  
So if you read on you might see yourself in this poem.

A most disgusting poem.

A future ex-husband limps through the door  
Eying an after-hours' beast hoping to score  
The bartender mixes a dirty bloody Mary  
And sightless Andy chokes on his cherry  
Then the local convoy be-bops in  
And bit by bit the party begins.

There's Vinny "Do-Diddy Pimp" Victor  
Looking to procure a virgin stripper  
Preaching is a sullied pope  
While everyone downs the soap  
That cannot revive their hopes.

And there's old horn-dog Jeff  
Who underwhelms even himself  
And a topless waitress with a silicone ass  
Who assumes little more than she grasps.

Yeah, every night it's the same old scene  
Smoking dope, sloppy drunk, being horny  
At the Halfway-Inn, again.

And there's old preacher Jerry with the pool boy wife  
A blue-eyed voyeur with a martyred life  
And the professor with blue pills in his drink  
Who never gives love, only nervously blinks.

Yeah, rank and file it's the same old scene  
Placated, unsubstantiated, masturbated at Mr. Spate's Inn, again.

And there's the young blood with the homespun soul  
And the Queen of Hearts stumbling down a rabbit hole.  
And there's ice-maiden Jane who forever reminisces  
She kneels, blesses herself, and doles out French kisses.

Yeah, they all show up, the Iggy Pops and Jim Crows,  
Deadheads, redheads, and dirty blondes stealing the show,  
Who speak in tongues, consult with nuns, and wish to be mistreated  
Who misplace their dreams only to claim they were cheated.

Yeah, every night it's the same old scene  
Smoking dope, sloppy drunk, feeling horny  
Mislaidd, even, at Royal Albert Hall, again.

**Days of Beauty, Strange Days**  
**Noel Negele**

I move from place to place,  
collect stories, meet new people,  
take in the landscapes—  
I don't stay long in a single job,  
I don't anchor myself in one field—  
I end my relationships after  
two to three months,  
don't give women enough time  
to fall in love with me  
or truly know me,  
it's cruel to do that—  
I'm weary of weeping faces.

At the new warehouse  
I work in a freezing environment  
with three other coworkers  
on such a mind-numbingly  
boring post  
that it's made a talker out of me.

We face each other  
while breaking boxes  
for nine and a half hours  
everyday,  
dressed in high visibility  
jackets, skull caps,  
face masks, scarfs—  
the only thing visible  
from our facial features,  
our tired eyes.

We kill the time  
by talking about anything  
and everything  
while slowly going deaf  
by the loud machinery all around us.

Nihal, on my right  
is a 22 year old Algerian  
already married with  
three kids, he says.

You really stepped your foot in it,  
I tell him.

He shakes his head regretfully.  
Apparently, his 19 year old wife  
wants three more kids.  
It's stifling, he says,  
I don't make nearly enough money.  
I don't know what to do.

On my left, Neil, a fat boy  
from Liverpool  
breaks the boxes with his elbows.

Don't you just wish  
you paid more attention  
at school, I ask him.

He says he has a better job waiting for him  
in September,  
a job at a call centre.  
Somehow, sitting all day in front of a computer  
taking abuse from raging customers  
sounds better to him.  
I imagine him getting fatter and fatter  
in a cubicle  
leaning dead over his desk  
at the age of 34  
because of his oversized heart  
attacking him  
and lying there for hours and hours  
until his irritated boss approaches his body  
and gives it a shove  
and asks just what the hell  
is he thinking going to sleep  
on the job.

Opposite me, stands Steven  
a 58 year old Scotsman,  
all skinny and feeble and kind  
and more energetic than the rest  
half his age.  
An ex junkie,  
my favourite person in the warehouse.  
“Been on the Junk since I was thirteen,  
me, pal, had to move to Ireland to get clean.”

I ask him if he got clean on his own.  
Aye, he says, all by me-self.  
Now, I just take Valium  
from time to time  
to take the edge off.

I nod. Valium is a hell of a tablet.  
A very tasty poison.

At the bottom of each  
cardboard box,  
bold capital letters in red  
read:

WAYS YOU CAN USE THIS BOX:

1. MAKE AN IMAGINARY RACE CAR
2. MAKE AN INTRICATE CASTLE FOR YOUR PET
3. PUT IN ALL YOUR OLD CHARGERS
4. GIVE IT NEW LIFE BY RECYCLING IT

I take a black marker and write  
over the red words.  
I have to entertain myself, somehow.

WAYS TO USE THIS BOX:

1. STORE COCAINE IN IT
2. SUFFOCATE A CAT
3. USE IT AS TINDER TO START A FOREST FIRE
4. FILL IT WITH KILLER BEES AND LEAVE IT ON A DOORSTEP

I put the box on the conveyor belt  
and watch it travel through the warehouse.

After work I frequent  
a beat down pub  
in an ominous alley  
you wouldn't go through  
even if it saved you a lot of time.

The men there are dark-faced,  
their women mean-looking,  
all their hearts filled to the brim  
with hatred,  
it's a foolish affair to hate,  
yet they're consumed by it.  
I study them. I see the old me  
shoulder to shoulder with them.

I drink two or three beers  
and call it a day,  
proud that I can drink  
not to get drunk,  
proud I can take the world in sober.  
Glad to not be leaning  
heavy against anyone,  
glad to be able to help people  
I care about, finally

I wish to be kind  
but I'm afraid  
of being kind  
towards the wrong person.

On the ride home  
I smirk at my rear view mirror.  
The wind is in my hair  
and the smell of spring  
is a fine smell indeed  
and although there are many burned bridges  
in my past  
I make plans for my future  
too hopeful to even write about  
lest I jinx them.

In these days of solitude,  
in these days of beauty,  
I am used to being  
a stranger amongst strangers—  
I am my own home now  
and when I go to bed  
I don't toss and turn  
I slip right into  
oblivion.