

Poems Published 2001-2010

Snails

snails make the most disgusting sound
when they're crunching underfoot

it's a wet, fleshy crunch,
light on the crackle component

somewhat exotic and french,
in that regard

still, one wouldn't want to walk
about in the grass
barefooted after it rains,
when there are scores of snails in the yard
many of them up by the house
right in front of the doors

camouflaged by darwin's god
better it would be now
if they were day-glo orange

or carried harder shells
or less meat
or moved faster
or weren't snails

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Case #2—Xavier, age 80
(from *The Case Histories, Vol. I*)

masturbation is better than fucking
every honest person knows this to be true
it is less messy, less time-consuming, more convenient,
and not dependent upon anyone else's whims, moods, timings or maladies

nonetheless, i am a man of some standing
certain actions and activities have been expected from me
and i have complied
i have coupled with various women and have sired children
after all,
i have my legacy to look towards,
and an excess of masturbation drove my nephew insane

yes i have a temper
yes i have raised my hand against my wife
i am sure it is no less than she deserved
she could not be trusted (but there is no one who can)

as i grew older
the gardener's young son became attractive to me
i gave him gifts and made him first in my affections
but to the others i was also affectionate
each and every one of them at one time or another
shared the pleasure of certain intimacies with me

i would brook no opposition to my desires
a man is master of his own house if of nowhere else
and if i desired to know of my daughter-in-law's lovers
that is my business

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Case #40—Lee, age 40
(from *The Case Histories, Vol. I*)

i been horny since way back when
this thing happened once
i don't wanna talk about it
and afterwards, i couldn't get it up when i was with a woman
the only solution turned out to be
having sex with really young women
especially if they looked younger than they were

i wanted to keep it legal, you know

one day, i saw a teenaged girl
young teenager
being beat by her mom and right away
that gave me a hard-on and i came
right there
right then
later, i came again just thinking about it

this changed my life
now i have to see girls being beaten
or read about women or girls being hurt
in order to have the sex life i have
which is probably not the same sex life you have

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Case #56—Jason, age 28
(from *The Case Histories, Vol. I*)

i have an important position in the government so i must be discreet
these matters must be attended to in the proper fashion

i make arrangements monthly to visit a certain person in a certain place
there is a room with a bed in this place
i undress myself completely & the certain person ties me up as i lie upon the bed

she then beats me soundly with a rubber hose on the soles of my feet
& on my calves & my butt until i achieve orgasm
i always achieve orgasm, that is the point
then we are finished

she unties me & i get dressed
i leave this certain place & go on about my business
important government business
fit as a fiddle for one more month

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In Working Real Life
(from *The Surfacing Tool*)

Coming up next, anyone could, then, in a working real-life family,
believe women could not have children.

What are we, a beer? Ah, thanks. Thinking my
name behind it, the right side changing direction, I've been
working all summer just to try and learn a holler,
as well as the first word: Stingrays don't attack humans.

You are home to the first search for work: my family.
She's got something to get on the road: kissing noises (it's a miracle).
Join us and our furry little friends, speaking German rapidly.
Yes. Or *ja*. Now, we're going to go on to the next question:
every move you make?
(shouting) (cheers and applause)

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the compleat gentleman

i came home from work one night
and found my girlfriend and my
roommate in bed together

i paused a moment while he rolled over and said
oh jesus
and she lay there pulling the covers up and saying nothing

so i said
let me join you
and kicking off my shoes
climbed in with them

she was her usual, charming and beautiful
but i had my eye on him

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the light

i believe in gallons of powerful coffee
laced with quarts of cream

pyramids of raspberry danishes
high-stacked beds of juicy steaks
cigarettes of marijuana and tobacco

fine dry wine
martinis with olives

the curve inward of a woman's waist
(nature's most perfect line)

the wet spot
the way she comes under my touch
her smile and the light in her eyes

and the light
my god, the light!

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regarding dreams and prisons

i'm given to understand freud said
we are all of us imprisoned by our dreams.
but i'm shut right now in a small room with no windows
(artificial light, overhead and flickering)
and have no way to verify whatever freud may
or may not have said, regarding dreams and prisons.

last night i was imprisoned with cream cheese cupcakes.
i'd never had them before and they were delicious.
i peeled their papers back, pressed my fingertips down onto
the crumbs that fell from them onto the table also imprisoned with me,
and licked my fingertips. the cream cheese was the color of butter.
the cupcakes were cupcake yellow.

some nights i find myself imprisoned with my best friend,
though he has been dead many years. last night he was still dead,
and i was trying to make sense of the mess he left behind.
he had not turned his calculators off, nor left any instructions.

this was before (prior to) the cream cheese cupcakes.
i complained to shadowy dream people imprisoned with me
about my best friend's machines. the shadowy dream people later
shared with me the cream cheese cupcakes.
i like the sound of the phrase, cream cheese cupcakes,
though i didn't particularly care to share any of them, and i'm not—

never mind. some nights i share my prison with a woman i had hoped
both to love forever and to have stopped loving some years back.
looks like forever is the winner, so far.
i'm imprisoned with forever, which gives me the entire universe
as my incarcerated companion. the man who has it all,
including the dream of a beautiful cellmate,
and a telephone in this small room with no windows
(overhead light, artificial and flickering). it may ring, this phone.

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yardwork

landlord mowed the cats.

landlord mowed the welcome mat, grasses, bushes, seedling trees and twigs,
small rocks.

the small rocks.

cats batted small rocks. fresh-mown cats howled thin yowling cat-howls
after landlord mowed their water dish.

cats batted small rocks, pirouetted feline pirouettes with slender twigs.

slender twigs littered the cats' back yard.

slender twigs littered the fresh-mown cats.

bushes of cats danced along the edges of the lawn.

small rocks rolled across the welcome mat.

small rocks rolled.

small rocks rolled between the cats' paws, under the soles of landlord's feet.

unmown hose was rolled, safely stowed upon the drive.

landlord rolled the fresh-mown cats across the welcome mat,

down the drive through splintered seedling trees to where the bushes dance,

where the twigs pirouette at night, under the vulpine moon.

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the king

in the land of the blind i had one eye
and i was the king

more than the king i was the god
i could take whatever and whoever i wanted
all the gold
any young virgin

bored with this i traveled to the land of those who have two eyes
sometimes a third
and some even four

they could see what i could not
they could perceive depth and see within

their servants all were one-eyed men

there is no way for me to return to my kingdom
i serve others now, and no longer know the blind

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the latest war news

up in the third third of the night, unable to return to sleep,
in my flannel robe i sit cross-legged on the floor in front of the television,
watching the latest war news—urban fighting and point-blank fire,
bunker-buster bombs and thousands of empty combat boots, firefights filmed
in unearthly green light, dead and wounded in uncounted numbers, palaces littered
with shattered marble and broken glass, rubble and fire and ceaseless black smoke
—all interspersed with ads for situation comedies, sleek and shiny high-powered cars,
and medicines that should do the trick (though there may be unfortunate side-effects).
i am advised to consult with my doctor, take out a low-interest loan, and stay tuned.

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the war

everybody in the city is talking about the weather
the dusty sky
how the entire city smells of housecat
how no rain has rained in weeks and weeks
no rain to settle the dust
wash away the sprayings

everybody in the city is talking about the forests
how if it doesn't rain soon the woods will surely burn

nobody in the city is talking about the war

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