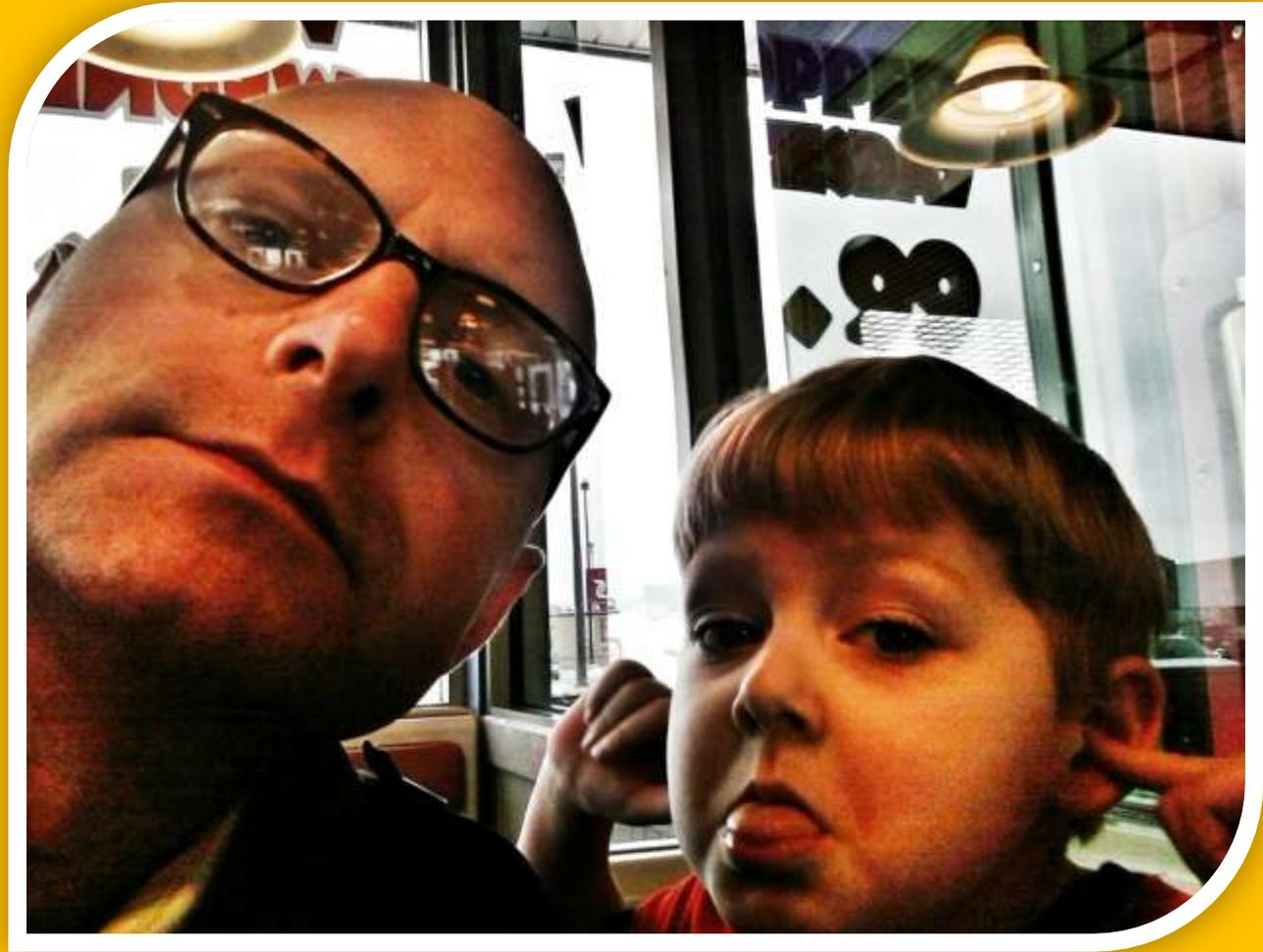


FRAUDULENT Twinkies



Nathaniel S. Rounds

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A Ruse Aroused

Going for broke gives your métier certain cogent motivation
You can
Order it on speed dial
You can ask it to be
Unleashed
Until you broadside
Some poor,
Wretched mental patient dragging his torn memories like a tug boat

The injured porker
Is quick to protest

"Where *is* that dilettante,"
Asks he,
"Who demands
One's Meisterstück be
Served in a waffle cone?"

Nympholepsy Illustrated (of Vapours, Bile and Gaul)

He tempted the fished with
Ethereal nets
This near-sighted, infantile
Mystagogue dancing on a
Slick
Pool of purple prose
Revealing his fervent
Trolling for lines of
Digression/ composite texts /
Faded allusions
To gardens made things of
Naught

This, as he saw it, was
The natural order of
Things, this world once green
And vibrant along
The Silk Road but now
A cruel, ashen Diaspora
Of colours burned from memory

And we mourn here and
Meditate upon
That which we have
Heard, beheld and
Handled

This minute-as-minuet
Played by the cold,

Austere hands of a
Northern hobo

Today
As the world turns
Slate-grey and wanting
With a saltbox house at
The extreme left third of
The landscape

Here
Appear the Django brothers
Two pearl divers sporting
Toy baby carriages for hats
With skeletons revealed
In alternating x-ray
They approach the
Domicile with flashlights
Both impervious to
Daylight

They tap dance a tango as
They enter the home and
Find no one
Just a terra-cotta army
And *The Art of War*
In paperback

In a spare bedroom they
Chance upon a giant
Velour pillow

The Django brothers are
Enraptured by its
Presence and bury
Themselves in its softness

They lose themselves
While never quite losing
Awareness of things both
Within and without

One remarks to the other:

“This is the natural order
Of things,
This Thai chicken on rye
With a bread and butter
Pickle...

“This meet-and-greet
Between Mother Autumn and a surgeon about an
Obstruction over one
Ovary, culminating in a
Total abdominal
Hysterectomy with a nine- year -old bowling
Champion standing in for
The anesthesiologist...

“This is the natural order
Of things,
When elderly twin sisters

In sun bonnets knit
Feverishly in an open
Carriage during a gale."

These and other remarks
Are rudely interrupted by
Mitigating Circumstance
The hapless, heartless
Guileless bearer of bad news

Who

Enters from the back door
Unannounced and
Unrefined
Long arms dangling like
Meat on hooks saying:
"Oh my *goodneth!* The *time!*
Mrs. Jones should be home any time,
You know! And her three children!
Oh dear! The *Time!*"

Torn between ecstasy and
Despair
The Django brothers
Attempt to bolt out an
Open window

But are overtaken by
Tsetse flies blown into the air
Like a hot, desert wind

By an unseen, long-lost baby
Brother and the linen curtains convulse
Like undulating ocean waves
Seen from the wrong angle
Dancing and twisting as when a
Woman is spun away
From her dancing partner
The folds of her dress
Twisting to her reaction to
Oppositional force from
One hand which she
Squeezes in her grasp
Ever so anxious to turn back,
Turn back....

Selfish, Trashy People

Pixie Tearfest is woking on/Asbestos dust falls from hole
In kitchen tile made by leaking professor/ in the kitchen
Of a Mandarin/ Cantonese/Acadian Pizzeria
Pixie strips

Down

To a duct tape tube top and a diaper
And with pickaxe and climbing gear
Ascends the reserved table for two/
Big time attorneys with smallpox in remission
And proceeds to floss her teeth with waxed, mint-flavored floss /
Over their kung pow and tofu pizza while followed by the camera's
Ever-watchful
Eye
While the OB truck broadcasts the travesty
As it comes undone
And while this may have
Piqued the curiosity of some viewers
Of the national news
Let us never forget that it was a CANADIAN-
Owned office supply house that provided
Two dozen HB pencils for the NASA
Ground crew's janitor.
Says Pixie:
"Goldman- Sachs mowed my lawn...
Then took my house and family."

Blaze of the Whirling Sword

It's neither idle nor unfruitful

This

Monkey faced orchid

A floral primate of

Ecuador

As it lies in waiting

Pressed flat in a kiss next to the 13th Psalm



Gold ringed in clothing bright

Man's anger lingers on
Ineffaceably inscribed
Upon a yellowed page
It's metachromatism
As metamorphosis
With a self-inflicted wound
Unapologetic
And unyielding

Fake Crocks for Crack Pots (Half-Off)

And what are we to make of these striations of beige and pink interrupted by stretch marks on a lady's belly billowing out over her sweat pants as she hobbles over her push cart in a liquidation center in Rhode Island while eating a hot dog with relish spilling onto her hulk Hogan sweat shirt? A long-haired, teenage boy playing his Gameboy knockoff while sitting cross-legged in the cart says "Don't forget the beef jerky, ma."

A guy at the back of the store is shouting over the PA "Fresh off the truck: One pallet--one pallet only--that's one pallet load of factory refurbished, government surplus, electronic, Nakajima brand typewriters with one pitch wheel, one ink ribbon, and one ream of paper for the low, low price of \$89.99. I just parked one on a rolling office tray in front of the toilet in the mens room and I just wrote all the dialogue for a genre-bending Hutterite Sci-Fi romance graphic novel... and that was before finishing my business."

Then the PA guy mixes leftover batches of latex paint, cuts keys, and fits a dog for a harness while across the aisle in a Japanese sea food island three young men of varying ethnicity (including a Hispanic-afro-American named Thor) cut up sushi with flaming knives.

An old man goes up to a girl working in frozen foods and says "do ya have any tater tots?"

"Yes. Third aisle to your left."

"I *knew* ya have 'em," says the old man. "Do ya know what that makes you?" "What?" asks the girl.

The old man giggles. "Mr. Potato Head's wife!"

Meanwhile a gaunt, tall man resembling Abraham Lincoln dressed in a wife beater with "Virginity-- Help find a Cure" stamped front and back and candy-coloured short shorts is trying on a pair of hip waders before disappearing into a fish tank full of scummy water and dead goldfish. Donna Summer is singing over the intercom and a lady with three small children is covering their eyes as they walk by creepy Abe and his wading fiasco. The woman is lecturing the kids in Punjabi.

The jack of all trades returns to his first love--the PA microphone-- to announce that "today is the first day of the rest of your life. We apologize for the inconvenience."

All sufficient for a lost cause. But to keep on the safe side, let's hold the applause.

Octochord (Loganberry Broken)

With thanks to Benjamin Wallace Tarbell

Both courageous and content are the five nullified architects of industrial Milwaukee, home to Azerbaijan donkeys, the architect and ass jammed into irrational boxes and then Freud-washed and unleashed, their surrealist manifesto proclaimed by saxophones at noonday, vomiting fluorescent apology to my spilled intestines as a broken record : "Here lies the autograph of a minor vaudeville star, his opening night at the Apollo filled with stale jokes and chatter, every seat occupied by a former lover, the room an open wound taken by the river of regret. His heart holds a road that spills into a tar pit. The road has been named twice."

Night Bright

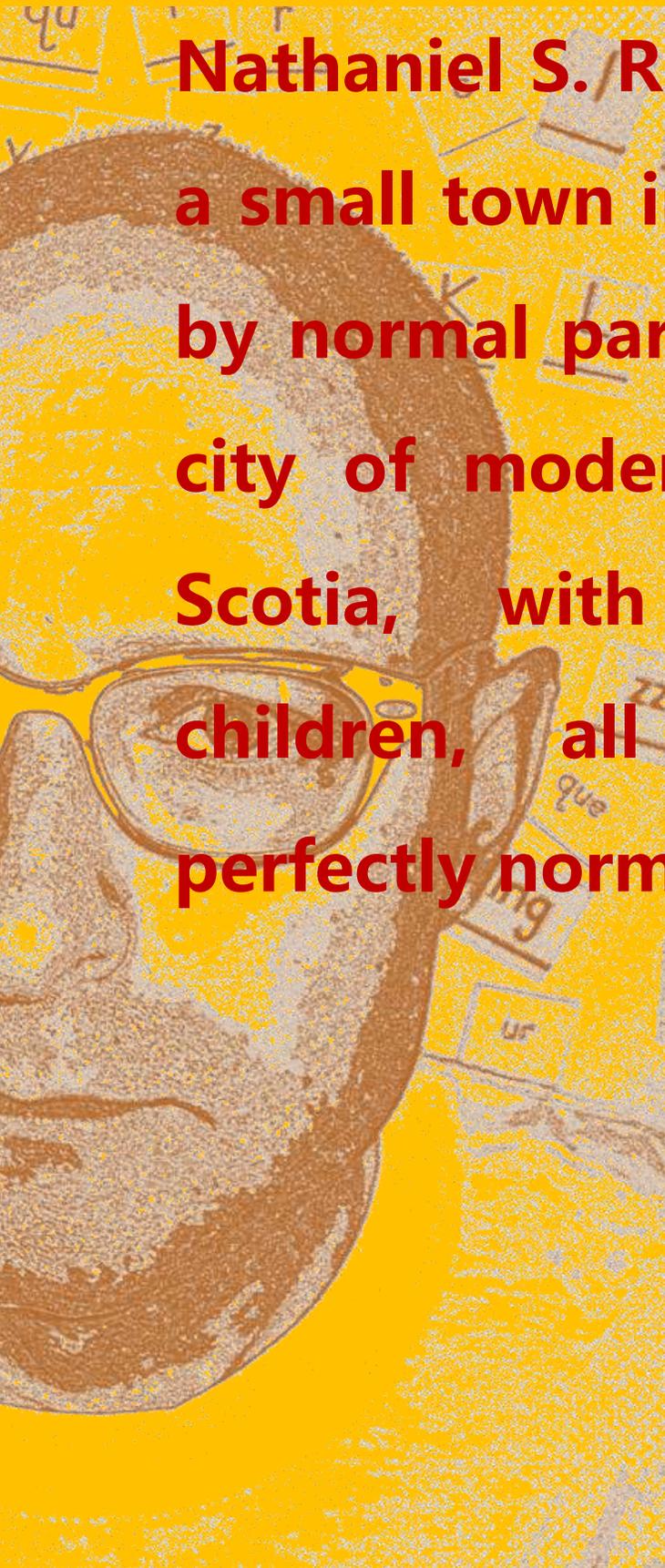
Cecil the aquatic baby gourmand is driving down the streets of the city of industry in a motorized bathtub with bubbles exiting the exhaust pipe, in harmony with the jet of water blasting from his blowhole. He offers Lava soap and caveats once parked. He confides to his main flame, a commemorative kidney-shaped candy dish full of creamed corn:

"We need to get a tonsillectomy license, and perform street tonsillectomies...not so much on the street itself as for the people walking on it."

His words serve as a means to console himself and refer to an anecdotal, seventy page book written by Kenneth Roberts called *It Must Be Your Tonsils*, which reads like a 1930s *Saturday Evening Post* serialized story, later submitted to Doubleday to burn off a book contract, which is pretty hip for a nine-month-old, who, only three months prior, had taken to the streets when his buggy broke free of mother Rorqual's grip because she'd taken two morphine to counteract the pain of staples removed post-biopsy,

and, in staring at white roses outside a florist's, she' d forgotten about the baby. Cecil rolled pell-mell downhill, and, as he couldn't make his way back, he hired an old lady to push him around while he did insurance renewals and peddled food juicers, available in six Mediterranean colors from Westinghouse, which had a short run and are now highly collectible. But it took Aristotle, owner of the Modern Times book store, to properly identify Cecil as a seaborne mammal-- like a whale, only anthropomorphized, as though Jonah was a big fish swallowing his own soul within his deep depths of anguish, only in spirit of course because in the main, Cecil appears as a baby with a blowhole, who, not long ago, suckled cold coffee from a rubber glove and ate cigarette butts and stolen crackers from a gas station. But tonight, in deep twilight, Cecil' s eyes are hot, white calamari projected onto the sky as noctilucent clouds, searching and scanning over Michigan and parts of Estonia. With rapid blinks Cecil transmits a message in Morse code to his father, the highly-esteemed Doctor Otto Jesse, who sits in a boat, toxic waters rising about him. He holds out a measuring cup, calling out for signs and measures and impending hale.





Nathaniel S. Rounds was born in a small town in Texas and raised by normal parents. He lives in a city of moderate size in Nova Scotia, with his wife and children, all of whom are perfectly normal.

