

**REPROACHABLE OPTIMISTS**  
**Nathaniel S. Rounds**



**Fowlpox Press**  
©MMXI Nathaniel S. Rounds  
All Rights Reserved  
**ISBN 978-0-9877346-0-0**

©Copyright 2011, Nathaniel S. Rounds  
Published by Fowlpox Press.  
This is an Egg Tooth Imprint.

## Contents

A rambling soliloquy about shotgun-toting ducks in the everglades, followed by a monogram featuring the use of jujubes for good rather than evil. Also some lyrics to an 18<sup>th</sup> century folksong concerning hygiene, as generally perceived then, i.e., “to bathe seldom shall lessen thoughts of impropriety”, etc., etc. Afterwards, the author invites himself over to your house, and asks to sleep on your sofa. That’s a dozen pages or so there. Then you close the book and glance nervously through window, waiting for certain doom. But nothing happens, and so you open a bag of nachos and eat them with butter, because you’ve always liked them that way. And that’s just wrong. Well go ahead, then, if it makes you feel better. *But it shouldn’t.*

Dark-Sword Grass

Uncle Uz  
He was  
A stuffed crust confessional  
Freeze-dried absurdist  
And

Moon in the valley of Ajalon

His  
Apple sack belly  
Burst through unzipped slit  
Of calfskin leather jacket  
Colour-matched to ship's sail of  
Face  
Torn  
By sun and sea

Uncle Uz snored and  
Sparked commands through noontime nap  
He cried "Nicotiana!" and proclaimed  
"STOP  
The incessant guitars  
For I shall TOUCH (!)  
And beautify  
Profound Taxi  
And maim egregious *them*

"STOP  
The creedless  
The sharp-nozzled  
The cankered

"Eviscerate with safety scissors  
Cheap smokes for third-world tots  
Pee on snuff and spoils of office  
Burgle the breeches of marauder bands

“For I shall TOUCH (†)  
And beautify  
Profound taximeter cabriolet  
And anoint its driver with  
The tenth of an ephah of burnt  
Toast

Jacob in Esau's Body  
In this *melange de noix*  
Søren Suigenocide  
The chicken gutter  
And bipolar bookbinder  
Eats  
People noodle soup.

He approaches people and says  
"Let's go Dutch on a Danish.  
You dilly. I'll dally."

With clipboard in hand he approaches a  
Single-detached house  
Semi-detached house  
Camp in the plains of Moab  
Row House  
Dugout canoe

An enumerator has filled in the information above regarding three dwellings in his/her Territory.

For which dwelling(s) does he provide instructions on surviving a nuclear attack?

He sleeps in his car and drives to work at 9:00 a.m. only to find the following messages on his Desk:

A message from a hostile Bald Knobber threatening to sing opera for the public if someone Does not call him back immediately.

A message from a member of the public upset about having to fill out the Braille form of the Questionnaire.

A message that an enumerator has resigned due to despair.

Which of the following answers best represents the order in which the homeless chicken gutter Should address the issues?

A. Just let it all go.

B. Just let it all go.

C. Peace on your spiritual journey. Seriously, bud, just let it all Go.

## Peace Work

I'm the guy who puts the banana skins on the bananas.  
It's peace work. Whenever I put the banana skins on  
The bananas, I feel peace.  
Most of the time, I put on the yellow ones.  
For stores that sell a lot of produce to old people,  
I put the green ones on. That's because green means  
Go, and old people have a hard time going. They  
Like to say their going has got up and gone. So we put  
The going back into their banana skins. Of course,  
Nobody eats the skins, but the green skins  
Give you incentive. When you smell the green in the scent of the  
Banana, it makes you want to go. And for people who don't  
Wish to buy yellow bananas or green bananas, we put on  
The black skins. These sell well to people who are mourning.  
There are quite a few mourning people. They get up first thing  
And all they want to do is jump up and die. So we give them  
A black banana with odd spots and they have something to cry  
About. It's our way of showing we care.

## Do Not Place Saw on Stretcher

I'm sorry our youngest, cruellest child  
Scratched your eye last November  
And that ever since then  
Your eye likes to declare its perennial anger  
By scabbing and weeping.

I'm glad that after recent treatment  
You could still spy that bald eagle  
At the corner of Middle Dyke and Bains.

However,  
Your eyesight is still wanting.  
I was that bald eagle  
At the corner of Middle Dyke and Bains.

A New Identity, Inc.

Sweetheart deal with a clinical social worker

And a ghetto palm

Results in capturing winged figure with

Hair governed by beeswax

Flowers forming rib vault over

Sly exchange of dollar bills,

New persona

This Could Happen to You

*I told them not to run*

Drugstore cowboys and weekend beatniks  
Whine mendaciously about teenage suicide  
Encouraged by SUPER ANAHIST COUGH SYRUP  
And cheap canvas tennis shoes

From the rooftop sings

George Washington Carver  
Voice shatters glass  
This made possible by  
Running without aid of glasses into  
Stainless steel peanut crusher

*I told him not to run*

Evening sky rosy red with  
Typhoid fever  
Causing the victim to dream  
Of an alligator slipping through the cat door  
To enjoy the hospitality of the Joneses

*It might be advantageous at this time  
To run*

Histopathologic Exposé of Brain Trauma  
(Lightly Fried)

Me?

I

*Worked from Thursday midnight  
Through to Friday afternoon  
Woke up in the spring time  
With the flowers in bloom*

Yourself?

Let me guess:

You've been bowling

With your painful piles for nine pins Stomach doing vegetable somersaults

Live on the Sewage Network

And for commercial break

The world's last housewife

Will sing/wail through tears:

*Hey chicks and Charlies*

*How's your old man*

*Still drinking bourbon on Gottingen Street*

*With that skunk leather jacket*

*And a farmer's tan*

The world moves indoors

And floods your toilet

While reading magazines

From the coffee table

And remarks loudly on your

Poor use of color and

How

*Poverty is a flophouse rental*

*And its landlord is Stalin*

*And the fight between*

*Tenant and landlord*

*Shall continue unabated*  
Blah blah blah  
*Until we silence the spirit of poverty*  
Yada yada yada  
*In utero*

But not to worry  
For  
This is what happens  
When  
The world and his missus  
Get drunk on self-analysis  
And reality TV

## Broken Record

Got a lovely set of 78' records here  
You can shoot them off the fence  
From the front porch  
Pick a record  
Pick a gun

There's  
Gene Autry and Slim Whitman and  
Some Sousa Marches

Got a couple of shotguns  
Dad left behind  
When he got itchy feet  
And  
Headed south  
Headed south  
Headed south  
One way

Shekhinah (Esse Quam Videri)

Hello rat,  
Hello doc

Don't be freaked out by the drained, blue dog  
Body not quite attached to body

Trying to sleep on a hateful loveseat  
Waiting for the dreams to slip under  
Overdrive

Little external jabbing prompts

One eye to open and behold  
God's own light  
Above the wings  
Of cherubs

Perched above a floor TV console

Pathé record  
Trills through a shofar horn  
The bothersome, neat rat  
Shall threaten the smooth beater

And allow the dog to dream

La Foi

When a woman moves a mountain  
She drags it  
Angles it  
And hoists it with her knees  
Then pushes it over an embankment  
Until it falls into the water

The mountain top becomes an island  
And the first step  
Towards walking on water

Palilalia (Trim over Squeal)

In a simultaneous blindfold chess display  
The world was now rejected by the people who reject it  
Bastard's muddle  
Motive quarrels  
Mama Earth has the Darmstadt blues

I think it takes three pills not to hear the mind cry  
Child pipe your eye  
Could have averted it all with one pill  
Open ill  
At the Balmoral Residence Club Hotel

I asked the wise man on the mountain top  
What he thought about Taco trucks  
His reply:  
"Taco trucks  
Might taste okay  
But will never pass inspection"

Creeping Things and Fowls of the Air  
At a block party for no one  
We watch our city sink into an open wound  
We watch ships do-se-do with cars and trees

And the earth whispers:

*Rise  
Perkin Rock  
Kill and eat  
Seed a cloud  
And make it rain on me*

Back shift manager  
With the third horseman  
On her forearm  
Gives overtime  
To her friends  
And almost no time  
To  
"Oh!  
Is that  
You  
?"

And the sky whispers:

*Face of the day I've heard your short cry  
Piece of flesh and Earth dust*

*Too bad you and your three  
Kids hunger  
You'll have Ramen noodles  
And no  
Meat*

We watch our city sink into an open wound  
We watch ships do-se-do with cars and trees  
We are wicks of light snuffed by the same breath  
Blight of self-interest has declared itself

And marked the day with night

Somnambulist

*Drop the best thing you ever wrote*

You are walking down a pathway only you can see

*Drop the best thing*

You see gravel where there's oncoming cars

*Drop the best thing you ever*

In the city, bright lights replace beds of flowers

*Wrote*

