

***And Your Dreams Will Be Made into Songs that Sell Burgers and Cars***

**Nathaniel S. Rounds**



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Contents:

Paper strip punched with holes.

After swallowing a harmonica you can bite down on this paper

And it will produce Bach's Minuet in G major

## Good Evening Wal-Mart Shoppers: Three Poems<sup>1</sup>

### **Five Minutes to Ten**

Poco sings mopy a cappella  
About crazy love  
Like college kids in cowboy hats  
And Brett Dennen's entire catalogue is spilling over  
Annie Lennox exclaiming that there must be an angel  
And the old crone from Infants is ordering a blue vested kid  
To put security devices on her breast pumps  
Which he won't do as he is busy texting on a cell phone  
While some bespectacled eight year old named Saul David  
Is inviting other eight years olds to join him in electronics  
From a cell phone on display  
He then proceeds to activate the camera  
And record a speech regarding organizer-as-pariah  
Which leads to affirmation  
Served up as applause by a hundred peers  
And the government shall be upon his shoulder  
Like a radio

### **We Invite You to the Front of the Store**

Chicken Nugget Cup Cake is veering through the aisles of Wal-Mart  
With her track pant thighs engulfing the whining scooter beneath her  
And if her driving is a little precarious it's really not her fault  
What with the RC cola in one hand and a moon pie in the other  
And the morphine working its magic on her broken back  
But her mind is a mess and she tries to pick the stack base display of  
Spatulas and Brillo boxes from the made-for-television dramas  
Unfolding in her mind like the one about that woman who looked so  
Much like Pat Benatar and who loves sports and wants her son to be a  
Track star but her son wants to join the New York Theatre Ballet  
And when the guidance counselor from her son's school calls her  
Into his office to level with her about her son's future  
There's this tension as the camera cuts closer and closer  
To each actor and the guidance counselor says something about  
"Your son's future path will deviate from your dreams for him."  
"I know that," says the mom, and her profile really does have

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<sup>1</sup> Published in *Misfits' Miscellany*

That Pat Benatar thing going on and then the guidance counselor  
Played by Christopher Walken because he needed the money  
At the time says her son has to listen to his own heart  
And the camera closes in on the Pat Benatar lookalike as Mom  
With her tears coming down her face and Roxette's *Listen to Your Heart*  
Starts up in the background as Walken says "Your son. Will go.  
To medical school. He will be a near-sighted proctologist.  
He'll have a practice in Des Moines. His condo will be in Vermont.  
He will take up skiing. And drinking. And. He will write a bad novel.  
It's about a young musical prodigy. He leaves Julliard. You see.  
He lost. His hands. While carving. A turkey. "  
The mother shakes her head. She sniffles. "Nobody's going to read that."  
"It doesn't matter," says Walken. "He must listen. To. His heart."  
And by now Chicken Nugget Cupcake has narrowly missed the spatulas  
And Brillo Box display but smashes right into the large box of five dollar movies  
And the movie that falls into her scooter basket next to the six pairs of diabetic  
Socks is "Move the Rock" starring Christopher Walker and Blair Tefkin who had  
To wear makeup to look older. And as the store manager leans over her and says  
"ma'am, ma'am, ma'am" he takes on this Lord Buckley appearance only with wings  
And he evokes a jazz mass which unstitches the facades of those waddling masses  
Hunched over their carts and they become enraptured in a shared gale of laughter  
That rises into the air like so many soap bubbles in the cool, cool water

### **We Are Now Closed for the Evening**

"Do you have *Dark Spirit Apocalypse:*  
*Eat the Children IV*  
With the bonus Guillotine  
For Sony Kill Kube?" asks the four year old  
Peering over the cash counter

"Yeh," coughs the acne-riddled apple  
On a stick in the blue vest  
"And can I pay for the 100 rounds of 9mm?"

"Yeh," coughs the apple  
"Need ID though."

The kid produces a baseball card  
With a Del Monte banana sticker  
And some felt tip marker trickery  
Transforming it into a driver's licence  
For a thirty-eight year old

“And the tall boy,” says the kid

“That’s eigh’y-six nine’y-theven,” says the apple  
“Izat on your Wal-Mar’ Mas’card?”

The kid slaps his jacket pocket  
“Got a bag of good flake.”

The apple sniffs and nods eagerly  
And as he hands the bags to the kid  
Leans down to whisper:  
“Meet ya’t the bathroom by Site to Store.”

## Courtly Love

Chivalry isn't dead  
It's just in remission  
Like a cockroach sleeping  
There beneath the stove  
In Hell's Kitchen  
And I will gladly open the door for you  
While you speed through  
Eyes closed to my empty gesture  
I will carry your books home  
Even though nobody reads books  
These days and  
I will gladly send a bottle of wine  
To your table  
Even though you hate wine  
And this week only  
I will offer you my protection  
Even though your dwarf me  
With those high stiletto heels  
Because despite the common consensus  
Chivalry isn't dead  
It's just a coat we sometimes shed  
To avoid the heat

## Blitz Chess Blues

C'mon, Chloe, so wild and shy  
Sideshow Horace is playing your head  
In the Mixolydian mode  
I mean it's in and out of your cerebrum's grasp  
This glib love caught in a paper bag  
And he wants to win  
Your gullible heart  
And cook it with some garlic on the barbecue  
Because in the end, Basho had it all wrong—  
Poets want to be fat and well compensated  
In the here and now

## Tusk Formed From Hair<sup>2</sup>

Seymour Schull

An Asperger syndrome-ridden plesiosaur  
Bought three zucca gourds that weighed 57-63 lbs  
From the gourd lady  
Who lived in a one room shack in Herring Cove  
Seymour glued them and painted them  
To resemble systemic narwhal triplets  
Complete with spiraled spikes  
And he named them Napoleans I, II, and III

At night they engaged in  
Cocktail conversations in Inukitut  
Which was punctuated by electric lights for eyes  
Blinking over camper trailer porch underneath the pines  
And he would describe them in infinite detail  
To Landra Sweeney the gourd lady  
Who would listen without looking up from her garden

In the winter she came to him on snow shoes  
Bearing a blanket and a tin of tuna  
They ate the tuna on crackers  
And talked about places they would like to go  
The kindred friendship led to matrimony  
Of the most understated kind  
One ring and one bracelet  
And a plate of fishcakes  
With the notary public serving as justice of the peace  
And dandelions and apple trees  
As maids of honour and best men

While Seymour mended nets by the dock  
And retrieved traps and buoys for a dollar apiece  
He made sure to save money for three gold rings  
To place on the tusks of Napoleans I, II, and III

At anniversary time

And Landra would make them cocoa  
While Seymour related in great detail  
Their wedding day and the number of clouds  
That had marked the blue sky

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<sup>2</sup> Published in *The Delinquent* (UK). The acceptance letter was a dense, surrealist poem with block caps  
In the middle suggesting I'd be in *The Delinquent* #18. Jabberwocky as acceptance. Beautiful.

And how the clouds were cumulus  
And the wind speed was twenty km/h  
And there was no rainfall  
And Landra wore her hair in braids with  
Elastics and  
A black dress with two white stripes  
At the bottom  
And they both wore knitted caps  
And a few all season folk sat in beach chairs  
They both laughed recalling  
Landra's mother falling asleep mid-ceremony  
But she was eighty-six at the time  
And so they forgave her

After their forty-sixth anniversary  
By which time Landra could not be bothered  
To grow gourds or dry them and paint them  
And Seymour was too crippled to mend anything  
They took Napoleans I, II, and III

Landra watched from the shore

While Seymour pulled the narwhal triplets  
Further and further out to sea  
With their electric lights blinking in the dusk  
And when Seymour returned to shore  
Coughing and muttering  
Landra gave him brandy from a flask  
And they told old jokes and fell asleep  
To the sight of three gold-and-light decorated narwhals  
Bobbing out with the tide

## Lunatic Sidecar (Curling Hair Outwards)

κ ['A'leph]

A rapid hubris inhabits  
Baruch Bascom Lamar Chasdai  
And of his intellect we may say  
It is a hash[ed] up bird brain  
His formative education being  
A blood-red View-master and a coffee can  
Topped up in 3-D slide reels

Baruch's mother  
Big Imah Sally Waters  
Took a correspondence course  
In holistic hairdressing  
Using the homeless and the infirm  
As her lab rats  
Streaking their hair and covering their heads  
In wigs and fezzes made from natural fibers

Boy Baruch took into his mind and heart  
Three dimensional stills from popular movies  
And tourist destinations

His body was a temple in which nothing  
Dared to dwell  
Except deliria papers and pleiad repairs  
And a sorrow unaccounted for  
By angels and seraphs of light

Baruch managed through a social worker  
To gain an introduction through special education  
Into the world of mankind  
And later gained a scholarship  
To attend the Mount Sinai School of Medicine

He completed his MD/PHD  
But it wasn't enough  
He hated modern medicine  
Or anything involving touching sick people  
And retreated to a single room apartment  
Which he covered with pictures in luminous colours

Of brides and grooms flying with foul and fiddlers  
Over ghettos from the old country  
He tried to speak of these things  
But something squeezed his voice box  
Making his words and ideas sound like  
Breath from a man on his death bed

But he rises to party  
In your favorite era

And he digs the chicks  
But not the ones you think  
He paints the children of mother hens  
Indigo and blood, blood red  
Then sends them to the ceiling  
To revile his life and his expectations

The chicks party South Pole dirt on his eyes  
And mouth  
They leave him choking and blind  
Somehow the seeker doesn't seem to mind  
He is patient that way  
You pull the blanket over his window  
To match his beat box broken eyes  
Don't despise the dead  
Break bread with the wise  
But you whine instead  
Ah, play the game, nesikhati  
Suck it up and play

ב [Behth]

Baruch just reclined in the shade of drawn curtain  
When Big Imah needed to buy scissors and curlers  
And textbooks and dye  
It was a Sabbath before Sabbath  
It was a suffering for a right cause  
And Baruch made sure his mother had what she needed  
Like a father rather than a son  
And the mind dies with the stomach, sonny  
The heart weeps one final drop  
And the mind goes to Gehinnom in a lunatic sidecar  
And papa never shows his dirty face  
And we shall never speak of him

Lest Yahweh Adonai frown a deep frown  
And feel sorrow such as never felt by man  
And we choke on charcoal and lead and bad faith  
The tobacco smoke and peeling paint of the forgotten  
And we cannot lift them from this rented tomb  
For who would ask a seven-year-old boy  
Who spends summer in darkness  
To triumph over forces that exiled his people  
From the holy land  
Into Spain and into Germany  
Then to an Ellis Island of the mind  
But always a hovel and a grind  
Always a shameful shadow  
Of the Eden left behind

λ [Gi'mel]

And Baruch came to write in the 1980's  
From the third floor of 68 Great George Street  
In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island  
Because it was a cheap sublet  
Although the toilet steamed when flushed  
And the roof leaked when depressed

Baruch transcribed the psalms  
Of Bartolomeo Schnozzola  
The great proboscis monkey with a pot belly  
And a nose that aided his musical bent  
But he secured a codex in this dropout scrub  
Who had taken a bus to Canada

And in Bartolomeo

Baruch found a father  
They mutually published each other's echo poems  
From their misogynist independent press  
And would take sojourns by bus to states  
To receive psychobilly haircuts from Big Imah  
Who shared a basement with a Russian dentist  
Who had been the second Halakhic Jewish cosmonaut  
And who had lost his licence to perform dentistry  
After using paper clips in root canals  
And stainless steel posts in paper billing files

And there were many things that Baruch did  
Which  
Were they were all written down  
Would give the New York City White Pages  
A good run for the money



Nathaniel S. Rounds wanted to sell shampoo, but optioned out as he felt that as a bald man, people would find it hypocritical. He tried portrait photography, but hated telling people they looked great when they clearly did not. So he opted to be a television sales guy by day, since everyone watches TV, whether they are funny-looking or not, and then resumed writing, as no one really seemed to mind.