

Expiring Winds Don't Care to Know



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Research Assignment

I started my research at Barnes and Noble on Saturday and finished it the other day when I received an email from an old writer friend from Austin, Texas (more on this later). Anyway I did some parallelism and did my research while my daughter went to story time at B&N (they actually have a good program there). So I went to the poetry section. The first observation I made was B&N didn't have a very good poetry section...not compared to some NY and CA bookstores I'd been to....City Lights BS blew me away...Ferlingetti (*and I am waiting to see God on television*)...yada yada. So I was very disappointed. Then I saw this book called, *Japanese Death Poems*. I said Ron don't go there this assignment is about American poets and Momentum and the Parallax view. But I picked up the book anyway...just to read one poem...

*Where did that dog
That used to be here go?
I thought about him
Once again tonight
Before I went to bed.*



Anyway I thought the book would be about Jap soldiers reciting something or other before they beheaded someone...it's a guy thing to think that way. But evidently there is a Japanese tradition to write a last poem before you die...preferably in Haiku. This one was written by a Zen monk a couple hundred years ago. So I go hmmm...and read some more and more and more. You get the picture. I guess I could say the monk's dog ate my homework but bear with me it gets interesting.

I have an epiphany in B&N in Merritt Island, FL. So I read some Ezra Pound Translations, *Exile's Letter*, written a couple of thousand years ago. The one about the guy who fails in life and the lament he felt. Then I

It's a collection "of Poems of Sensuality, Love, and Longing." No surprises here...guys and gals haven't changed much in a few millenniums. This guy Jelaludin Rumi (1207-1273) could definitely get laid today.

There's hope here. I mean if you turn off the TV and don't listen to the neighbor complain about the chinch bugs in his grass...if you just go to B&N and look in the poetry section...you can find some hope. Maybe that's what poetry is. That brief moment and place in the mind that walks across time as easily as you walk across a bridge. How did Baudelaire say it: *All scents and sounds and colors meet as one.* (only in French)

Yes.

You can walk across the bridge and know sure as there's fish in the water that there's a common place where cultures or religions or whether you're tall or short...pale in the light of poetry. It's timeless with no beginning or end...which brings me to the email I mentioned earlier. A friend sent a newspaper article about the death of Albert Huffstickler. Huff's the first person I ever did a public poetry reading with. He was the older guy and I was the young poet. Now I guess I'm the older guy. Here's his last poem...

*Tired of being loved,
tired of being left alone,
tired of being loved,
tired of being left alone.*

*Gonna find myself a new place
Where all I feel is at home.*

I wonder if that Zen Monk will ask Huff if he's seen his dog?

qual shoe tra le stelle

I remember Marlon Brando before he got fat.

Standing in the narrow New Orleans streets
looking up at the window, his arms thick
with muscle and smooth skin flush with de-
sire...

Stellahhhhh! Stellahhhhhhh!

I felt your pain, Marlon, as I threw tiny peb-
bles at Viveca Rodriguez's window, waking
her at 2am, a *Do Not Disturb* yellow post-it
note on the window.

Now I'm getting old and fat and forgetful
and I still feel your pain.



Stellahhhhh! Stellahhhhhhh!

Scintillations

I've traveled far enough down
this old river dark with pollution,
its only beauty the scintillations
of the moonlight reflecting from its waters
like fireflies escaping from a jar.
I grab at those fireflies...

They've been with me long enough I think they're mine.

They escape, glad to be free
like sparks stinging the water
and turning ugliness into beauty.

I've known a few scintillations.

They're like brief flares
screaming across the night sky...

Once I sat alone at the picnic in '61
(the year Maris broke the Babe's record)
clutching the Most Valuable Player award
feeling every eye on me whether they liked it or not.
Your voice sounded happy
and the hotdogs were delicious.

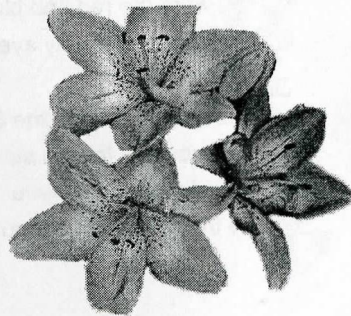
You wore the red and blue colors of the day
like a garland for my eyes.

Years later we rode the Staten Island ferry
and I couldn't tell the stars from the Manhattan skyline.
They danced about you
like the eyes from a thousand generations watching.

And the time in the Colorado Mountains
 where the evergreen branches bent low,
 weighed like snow shovels full of snow.
 The snow fell warm and light
 as we buried ourselves in the snowdrift.
 Pretending we lived in an igloo
 we were just crazy enough to lose our clothes
 and counted the rainbows in each unique snowflake.
 Your body glowed sweetly red as a plum against the white.

The last time I saw you
 the Pacific Ocean couldn't hold
 your thin and pliant body
 in its kelp bed
 clear as crystal and green as emeralds.
 You exploded from the water
 like a shark with black hair beaching itself
 and collapsed on top of me.
 I drowned in the sand
 and your mouth was salty as sweat...
 your face burnt a hole in the sky.

I spend my days counting clouds
 waiting to see you again.
 There seems to be an endless number of clouds.
 And in the night...
 I try until my mind bursts
 to wish fireflies back into a jar.



Honestly! We Don't Care to Know



You are just are not listening
You are just are not listening

Slaughterhouse Five
Slaughterhouse Five

Do you still care to listen?

Rolling Rust Gathers More Bucks

I

The walkway from the alley where I park the car to the rear of the duplex is not lined with concrete but worn until only compacted dirt remains. There are thirty to forty paces, assuming the gait of a normal sized male, in that distance. Thirty paces in the morning when I step like a gnome intent on finding a diamond in the mine. Forty paces in the evening, the shoulders sloped like a roof sagging under a heavy snowfall. Melissa leans against the doorframe, arms folded across her chest, a foot extended in front, propping open the screen door. Her hair is nut-brown and falls across her face as if she wears a mask. Her eyes follow me as I leave (I once turned suddenly and saw her staring intently in my direction). As I drive away, she lifts an arm, waves a palsied farewell, and then smiles thinly as she relaxes her pursed lips. When I arrive in the early evening she is always in the doorway as if she stayed in the same spot the entire day. The same smile and hand wave as I left in the morning welcomes me home. As I approach, the thin smile becomes the pursed lips I kiss and ask in a daily recital, -What's for dinner?

II

Off the walkway to the left is a spreading live oak that shades the yard. An old truck tire like a black locket hangs from a rope that curls around a lower

tree branch three times. It sways slowly back and forth. As the tire approaches the apogee, it obscures a view of the solitary figure seated at the easel. The canvas on the easel mirrors the distorted scene before the artist. A 1948 Chevrolet pickup truck, its rust dabbling the brown paint, is parked beside a weathered garage. Near the front fender a tricycle, probably left by a negligent child, lies on its side, one rear wheel skyward. The distinguishing feature when first seeing the artist as the tire swings toward its perigee is the contrast between the mussed hair that partially obscures the earring in his ear and the precisely tailored beard. The sideburn, cheek and under chin are cleanly shaven. The dark moustache blending into the neatly trimmed hair on the chin gives the impression of a character from a Faustian tragedy. The artist's eyebrows, carefully manicured and perhaps even plucked, traverse the forehead like a hanging rope bridge. The full-face view reveals the hair as being short but long enough for a wave purling in the wind. A larger than life presence pervades the figure poised with brush in hand. But the artist is obviously short in stature when observed relative to the wooden easel before him. Again the tire swings to its apogee. However from this perspective the artist at work is not obscured by the tire's motion. He dabs the brush on the canvas... a brisk experimenting dab, then another and another, more certain each time. I am reminded of a song involving a hummingbird. His hand stops, withdrawing the brush. Then his head leans towards the painting, turning this way and that as if he were a falcon scrutinizing a favorite meadow. Carefully he touches the tip of the horsehair brush to the palette, then diligently makes contact with the canvas and completes the detailed shading that enhances the chiaroscuro of the hubcap on the front wheel. I recall seeing Angelo painting the same scene in the same manner for as long as Melissa and I have lived on the lower floor of the duplex. He always sits before the easel as I exit

through the back door. The screen door slamming would not disturb him even if Melissa did not catch it with her foot. Perhaps one day I will rise early in the morning, before dusk, and eat breakfast under the oak tree where he sets up the easel. I would like to describe his face as he comes down the stairway from the upstairs duplex. As I climb into the car, Melissa will be smiling at me from the doorway. She will wave farewell. I cannot bear looking towards her. Instead I glance at Angelo. The tire swings through its perigee behind Angelo, the artist, seated at the easel.

III

When I arrive home, Melissa waits for me in the doorway. Angelo pauses while I drag myself like a boat anchor along the path to the duplex. He turns towards me and smiles wanly, a surreptitious smile. Approaching Melissa, I do not watch my feet but stare intently at her face. The thin smile never leaves her lips. I kiss her at the doorway and ask, -What's for dinner? She says Angelo has invited us upstairs for a drink after dinner to celebrate the completion of his painting. I say, -For sure, how exciting. I notice scoff marks line my shoes like the dirty face of a wrinkled old bowery bum. Melissa glances toward Angelo and nods her head, acknowledging his invitation. Angelo returns the nod with the assured mien of an artist seeing an image of no interest to the artist's eye. He repositions himself in the chair like a bird settling in a nest and extends his arm to again touch the brush to the canvas. As we enter the duplex together, Melissa purses her lips into a thin line, a determined line as if painted in the sand by Angelo's brush.

IV

Angelo brusquely hands me the margarita, sloshing the drink onto my fingers and the cuff of my sleeve. Looking down at the cuff with the stain and smell of tequila and limejuice, I recall the derelicts in Duluth's bowery had such stains on their clothes.

My friends and I, the C-Keys we called our gang, hung out outside those slovenly bars in the bowery and asked a passing bum to purchase a six-pack of beer for us. After drawing the short lot, I entered the bar with the decrepit old guy so he wouldn't run off with our money. The bar had sawdust on the floor so when the derelicts heaved, the barkeep wouldn't have to immediately leave the bar and clean it up. The sawdust left a fine powder on your shoes and left lines like an old man's wrinkles. The bum walked to the bar and slapped the money we'd given him down onto the top of the bar with bravado like he was going to buy drinks for the house. Setting the girlie mag down, the bartender asked the bum, -Who is the kid? The bum mumbled, -My sister's kid. We need a six-pack. The bartender asked, -He twenty-one? The bum nodded and held onto the bar to steady himself. The bartender sauntered to the refrigerator, opened it and pulled out a six-pack of tall boys, the 16 oz cans looked like silver tree stumps. He handed it to the bum and scraped the money on the bar into his hand. The old bum took the beer from the bar and steadied himself as we walked out by putting his arm around my shoulder. Outside, the derelict continued resting his arm on my shoulder. Dangling a stained coat sleeve in my face like it was a hero's medal he slurred, -You're not twenty-one. Not a day over sixteen. I'm keeping this for meself. I smelled the musky mixture of booze and stale smoke on the sleeve. He kept jiggling the six-pack he held like he was trolling fish bait. I didn't answer but punched him right in the face and grabbed the tall boys he'd dropped onto the ground. The C-Keys ran off laughing into the

alley. The old guy lay on the sidewalk pushing that ugly sleeve into his face to stop the bleeding. He kept yelling, -the little prick broke my nose...the little prick broke my nose.

I hear Melissa mentioning my name. She and Angelo are laughing together. They stand in the kitchen, opposite each other. Angelo is offering her another margarita. The drink is green. His specialty, he says. Her drink does not slosh. Not even a ripple occurs as he gingerly hands the cusped glass to her as their pinky fingers touch. The painting sitting between and slightly behind them, on the Formica kitchen table propped against the wall and beneath a small brown cuckoo clock. The large hand of the clock almost touches the big number twelve. I wait for the cuckoo to come out and ask if the painting is properly hung. Angelo tells Melissa the pickup truck is a vintage model. He asserts trucks that old never depreciate. They become more valuable as each year passes.

Once I rode in the truck with Angelo driving. Melissa sat in the front seat between Angelo and me. The seat was like a big couch. She asked if it was difficult to drive a stick shift. Angelo said it was easy and asked her if she would like to shift the gears. I sat with my arm resting on the window frame, elbow dangerously outside, and looked ahead at the elongated hood. The metallic gurgle like a sore throat of the clutch being engaged and gears crunching annoyed me.

Angelo now rubs his fingers on the kitchen table and recites the punch line of another one of his witty aphorisms. I try to join in and say I just finished a new poem today. Melissa laughs like the sound of the old truck's clutch. They are impressed with the irony of Angelo's last statement, Rolling Rust Gathers More Bucks, and indulge in a long cachinnation on their cleverness. Suddenly Angelo blurts out that this would be a good title for the painting. Forming her thin lip into a demure smile and saying, -Get outta here, that's

so cool, Melissa puts her hand on Angelo's forearm. I lick the dissolved salt from the lip of the glass and take a sip of the lime-rich margarita. The painting is opposite me. I've seen the scene many times. The color that dominates is burnt sienna, probably from rust dappling the brown paint on the door, cab, hood, and sloping side of the truck bed. A weathered garage, its knotted graying wood seeming to creak, looms in the background to the left. The spindly matting of a bird nest is stuffed in the vee formed by the jointure of the eave and a beam protruding through the garage wall. A tricycle, thrust onto its side, hurls a wheel skyward. The line of motion of the truck is oblique to the plane of the painting. The bulbous front fender, protracted hood, gaping grillwork, and gargantuan front tire are out of proportion, exaggerated beyond the need for depth perception. I am reminded of an accident and want to run downstairs and write something.

V

During breakfast the next morning, Melissa talks incessantly about the painting and the cleverness of its title. I call it a title manqué and as a writer I thought it silly. I suggest, -An Accident, as an alternative. She rolls her eyes and preempts my explanation and says, -You a writer? Maybe, on occasion, you're good for a poem. Writer? I wouldn't say you're a writer. She insists I've misinterpreted the painting. The toast pops up and when Melissa retrieves it from the toaster on the heavily stained and worn countertop I seize the opportunity and say, -Not only literally does it look like the truck ran over the bike but it's all an accident that the truck...the bike...and even Angelo in front of the easel happen to be in the yard at the same time. Why do you suppose Angelo is always out there when I leave and you are at the door? The direction and substance of the

art form at the moment of creative expression is accidental...just like the painting. I rest my case as Melissa plops two pieces of buttered toast on my plate. Then she begins clearing the breakfast table and says, -I don't have a clue what you're talking about. It's nonsense...pure nonsense. Pivoting my head back and forth like a bird as she scrambles between the table and the kitchen sink, I say in a shrill voice of convicted finality, -Communication on even the most mundane level is miraculous. Except for the plate in front of me, all the dishes are in the sink. Standing over the sink, she extends her arms and places her hands on each side of the white porcelain cavern. Leaning forward and turning towards me she declares, -You're really confusing me. I like the name Angelo and I picked. It makes sense. You know I can't understand your artsy-fartsy talk. Staying at the sink she stops looking in my direction and periodically gazes out the kitchen window. She prepares a lunch for me. Into the brown sack she puts a tuna sandwich, an orange, and a small baggie of cashews. Leaving the lunch bag on the counter, Melissa whirls about and reports that a family of cardinals are living in the bird nest under the eave of the garage. Angelo told her he heard the male cardinal lilting his beautiful song while perched on the weathervane atop the garage. Still engrossed in the profundity of my earlier statement, I wipe my mouth curtly with a napkin, slide backwards in the chair, and rise from the table. As if cued, Melissa grabs the brown paper bag from the counter and pushes it in my direction. When she does this I am halfway to the door. It is not a long distance, perhaps two or three steps to where I stop. She refuses to walk over to me with the bag. So I walk over to her and take the lunch bag. I lean towards her offering a kiss. She declines by turning her face away. As I leave, she follows me to the door. She leans against the doorframe and catches the screen door with her foot as it swings back, propping it open. I do not look back. Her arms are folded across her chest. Obscured by the tire

hanging from the live oak, Angelo sits and paints at the easel. Melissa's lips are tightly pursed until they are two thin lines extending from cheek to cheek. The strong wind purls through Angelo's hair. I cannot understand how the canvas can remain on the easel in the wind. Melissa is smiling as I open the car door. The tire no longer obscures Angelo. His head is pushed forward as if he's about to rise or examining a detail not seen before. I drive away and Melissa waves alacritous.

VI

I have a dilemma. When I arrived at work they called me into the plant manager's office and I was given a check. People call it a pink slip but it's a check like any other check. I must leave within fifteen minutes the third job in as many months. Walking to the car I think it not a good idea telling Melissa. She wrings her hands over and over in a roiling, nervous manner when we talk about money. Having the afternoon free, I consider eating lunch in Hanover Park or spending the afternoon in the mall stores. Later I could go home as usual and pretend to return to work tomorrow. Then I could look for a job in peace without her hovering over me like a parent. But window-shopping has no appeal for me. I'll tell her the union went on strike but she'll ask when I joined the union and why we never went to a dance at the union hall. I drive home resigned to telling her the truth. As the car stops in a parking space beside Angelo's pickup truck, a dust cloud risen from the alley and following like a puppy dog engulfs the car. The dust cloud dissipates before tumbling past the garage. From this angle an observer in any window of the duplex cannot see the car. The morning wind lay dormant, a victim of the stillness of an oppressively hot and cloudless day. Leaving the car, I walk from behind the garage and notice the wooden easel under the

branches of the live oak. Angelo is not seated at the easel nor is the canvas anywhere to be seen. Melissa is not in the doorway, but I hear her laughter coming from an open window. Perhaps I also hear a male voice, maybe Angelo's, or it could be the low drone of a ceiling fan. I am not certain, as there is an air of unreality in the scene as if I listened to several stories simultaneously and doubted the veracity of each. I now hold a tire iron in my hand that was certain but don't ask me how it got there.

VII

At first it is the shape of the window, rectangular, then the screen, also rectangular...a loquat tree, leaves verdure but slightly wilted indicating a drought or possibly excessive heat, splays its branches skyward like fingers. Its longer branches extend across a window. A scrub, perhaps a chokeberry, is closer to the window than the loquat and, although it is only half the size of the tree, more of its branches obscure the window. This foliage, however, does not hinder a view of the window from this perspective. Despite the paucity of foliage apparent on this side of the window, a person looking outward from inside the duplex would probably experience the feeling of being in a green garden or a tree house. On moving closer, instead of laughter, I hear low mutterings, unintelligible yet rhythmic and kind sounding. The ceiling fan can be seen. The contrast of going from sunlight into shades makes it impossible to see clearly through the window into the room. However, the screen mesh is distinguishable, column after column, row upon row of rectangular grids resembling the shape of the window and probably the shape of a million metal walls if it could be seen on that tiny of a scale. Now accustomed to the penumbral shadings within the room, the screen grid fades from focus as the painting

on the chest of drawers comes into view. The painting leans against the mirror. Not all of the features in the painting are apparent since the viewing angle is oblique and the painting canted such that it forms a dihedral angle with the plane of the mirror. However, the elongated brown hood, leering grillwork, enlarged fender, and over-inflated front tire are clearly visible as if about to consume a Lilliputian tricycle, tipped onto its side, a lone tire flung toward an upper corner of the painting. No voices are heard. But the artist, his bare back to the window, can be seen. From this perspective, the hair is disheveled as if blown by a gust of wind or perhaps mussed by a frantic hand. A heavy, but thin, black object circles in the air like a wand. A huge gash now appears in the side of his head and deep reddening of the hair is clearly visible. The head flies back revealing a cleanly shaven cheek and under chin that borders the neatly trimmed moustache and beard. The facial muscles are not relaxed and a vein is distinctly visible protruding in an arc from the tapered eyebrows to the hairline. A study in opposites ensues not unlike blending primary colors on a palette. He appears as a beast, enraged, yet moves with the equanimity of one out for a morning stroll. The artist's hands probe in quick subtle strokes as if reaching for something and his body appears disproportionately large for the room. However, this is an optical or mental allusion as he is actually short in stature when placed in perspective with the painting nearby. At this point, enough has been done. Some action is appropriate. The last that is seen in the room are the two quivering naked legs, one on each side of the artist, randomly contracting like frog legs being shocked in a biology lab. Focusing on the screen mesh creates an opacity, more properly, a mental barrier, to cognizance of the waning actions in the room. The similar shapes of the window and screen provide comfort. All are quadrilaterals. And indeed from this position it can be verified the side of the duplex is also a quadrilateral. The withered fruit dropped from the

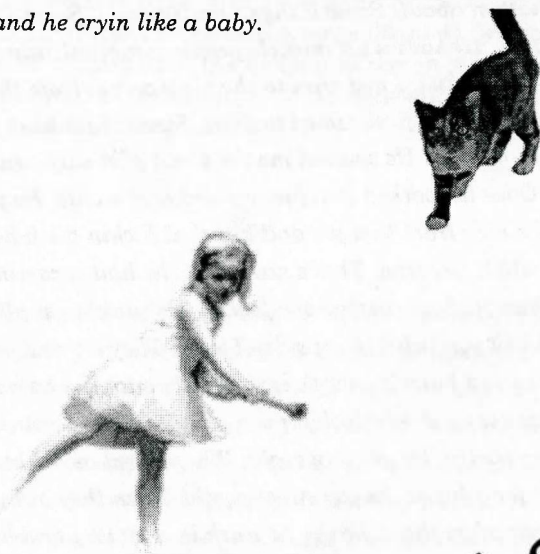
loquat trees makes it impossible to step without some of the fruit sticking to your shoes. The loquats are brown and rotted, not at all like the succulent fruit Melissa used in making sweet jams and jellies. The tree appears now totally devoid of fruit. However, the current interest in the tree centers on a chrysalis, firmly attached at the groin at the joining of a branch to the tree. Evidently the chrysalis is in the final stage just prior to the emergence of some insect, perhaps a butterfly or a moth, as mandibles have punctured the outer skin. The mandibles rip and gnaw haphazardly at the encasement. Then a brief rest occurs. Again the sharp jaws snip and slash. The escape is not an orderly affair but a violent exuberance. Feathered antennae pop from the shell indicating the insect is a moth. As the moth frees its head, the huge hand of the cuckoo clock in the duplex touches the large number twelve. A small bird storms from the clock and opens its mouth... cuckoo...cuckoo...cuckoo...and the remaining chimes fall on deaf, uncaring ears.

VIII

Sixth Street on Sunday morning is the worst place. No peds to pedal poetry to. They either go to church, praisin the big finger or wadden through the Sunday paper on a breakfast nook. Its been hard bein a street poet without peds on the street. At times with no peds around I feel like a livin pho... los...topher. It don't feel so good...I make my livin sellin poems—a couplet for a quarter, a quatrain for half a buck. Peds think a quatrain gets them more for their money. They aint gettin a break. There's a bit of the shyster even in a street poet. That don't feel so good either. But it's a livin. Interestin too. When I goes up to a ped I don't know whether there's a rhyming couplet or quatrain in me or

nuttin comin out. That's pursuin the inspiratin. Yo shoes yo cruise yo lose yo hushpuppy tongues ooze...flap...slap... that's my man struttin beside me. He taught me street poet talken and about chasin the inspiratin. He don't have no shoelaces. We headin to the Driskill hotel with me bobbin up and down like a cork...dodgin parkin meters...and don't let no one tell you cops don't suck. One foot on the curb and the other in the street that'eds the way me and my man like to walk. I a pain in my back from sleepin in the bush behind the O'Henry museum last night. Actually it's cause my man shoved me a good one...spun me on my head he did. He say walkin the curb will straighten it out. He mumbles lots o'things all the time. Truth is I don't know half what he's talken about. Some things I understand. Some I don't. So what. He says it's a miracle people communicatin at all. Aint that a fact. I met Him in the alley across from the Driskill when I first comed to Sixth Street. I couldn't make a livin no how. He showed me the street poet way...sure did. Once he worked in a factory and had a wife. He plain got the kick from that job and kilt that fuckin bitch he calls her with a tire iron. That's nasty but she had it comin near as I knows. Some artiste she fuckin. He caught em plain up. Don't you believin cops don't suck. They try and catch his ass and burn it...that's certain. My man say he a street poet cause no one be lookin for a murderer on the street recitin poetry. He got that right. When a ped asks him what he do for a livin...he say street poetin. Then they ask what he done afore that...he say he work in a factory and had a wife. Then says he got fired and kilt her dead. That's all. They just laugh and shut up and pays their quarters. We be peerin in one shop window after another while I watch for peds. Be bobbin up and down alone right now if I aint noticed my man stoppin in front of the Hand Feat gallery. He

wasn't sayin a word which was probably why I trundlin along by meself. Comin up behind til I stood even with his shoulder I flittin like a candystore kid from sculpture stuff to macrowmays to a paintin. My man say a street poet got to know this art stuff. They's a paintin hangin on the wall my man caint stop lookin at. In that paintin theys a rusty old pickup truck should o'ben put in a junkyard and a kids tribike. An ole buidin like a barn had a bird nest stuck inside it was behind that piece o'crap truck. My man points and say they callin this paintin, -The Accident. You knows my man points at that and he cryin like a baby. I caint figure it out. He cryin like a baby. I try hushin him. A ped comin and we got to dance up to the ped pursuin the inspi-ratin and he cryin like a baby.



What's That?

Poopy Butt

I'm a perfect dad like everyone else and my four year old daughter is an angel. Ok. So I dread taking her to Publix where I shop for groceries with ten thousand old farts jamming the aisles with their shopping carts and holier than thou lessons on parenting... If I had a nickel for each tidbit of advice offered by those candidates for the bone yard like Raptor talons dispensing candy...well I wouldn't have to work for food, or something like that... Why do I wheel my daughter down those aisles as if at any moment the canned foods were going to crash down or some grandmother would beat me with a cane?

Poopy Butt! Poopy Butt!

Translated...that's my daughter's obsession with the unmentionables. You never know when the words will stream from her mouth like those crazies in Chattahoochee State Hospital with the bad chemistry going on in their heads and they start this scatological stream of words that makes a sailor sound like he's giving a church sermon.

Listen to this...

I'm watching TV minding my own business... being the good Dad couch potato... it was the new Star Trek, Enterprise, I think... when she leaps on me like a cat and says,

Poopy Butt, Poopy Butt, you're a Poopy Butt...

Now if I'd done that to my father he'd smack me a good one thinking I'd just called him a shit head. But that was then and this is now so I log on to WebMD first chance I get

and there it is, plain as the nose on your face:
That little orifice down there and the "unmentionable products"
thereof fascinates a four year old. That's what they called it
"unmentionable products", get a load of that...is this politically
correct or what! They didn't even say feces...
They gave a few pointers and suggested I say to her,
"Let's reach into our mouths and snatch those dirty old words
out and throw them like bad tasting candy into the garbage can."

So next time I'm locked and loaded for her,
I sit down in front of the TV...good couch potato Dad that I am...
She comes out from her bath buck-naked on her tiptoes doing
this quick stutter step across the tile floor with her
legs and feet pointed outwards like she was
Charlie Chaplin doing a crabwalk...

Poopy Butt! Poopy Butt! Shake you bootees Poopy Butt! Oh Yaaaahhhhhh!

I don't know...I thought of that line from Prufrock...

"I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas."

Maybe the best thing to do is ignore her and the old farts at
Publix and hang loose until she turns five. So I say to myself
any kid with that much talent deserves to grow up unafraid
of her body and not thinking it's ugly. Now am I just a
super couch potato, politically correct Dad...or what!
I dry her off, put her pajamas on, and read her a bedtime story...
You know the one about the kid who runs away on the advice of a cat
and eats tangerines and saves a dragon from a bunch of
mean spirited animals who've hired a gorilla to twist the
dragon's wings until it hurts if he won't fly them back and forth
across a crocodile infested river...

I'm serious it's a real story!

So we get to that special moment when I turn off the lights
and she's sucking on her two fingers...the middle ones on her left hand...
and her eyelids are drooping like they have a sack of quarters pulling them closed
and the light from the hall is all soft and warm filling her room like candlelight
and I bend over planting my best Dad kiss on her forehead
and say "Goodnight, Daddy's Angel"

and her eyes snap open with this wild untamed look like
I need to call an exorcist

Goodnight! Poopy Butt!

And she falls asleep...
very peacefully...like
an angel raging against the night.



OverSharing

What is it with these guys on the beach with the big pink guts hanging out like balloons, drinking beer, and wearing orange swim trucks?

What part of the female anatomy doesn't have a disease covered by a special segment on the evening news? Really. It's making me paranoid!

Does water actually sound like it's dripping or is it just my imagination going off the deep end?

