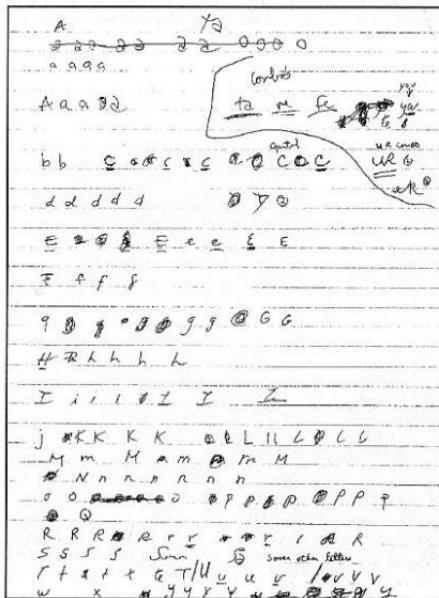


THE JUNKMAN'S PILE MOVES TOWARD THE MUNITIONS FACTORY



NICK STONE



POVERTY

1

being raw is sexy
being rough
hardened and tough
being a thug is sexy

but not being poor
no, never that
don't even think about it

poverty is banal
it doesn't catch the eye
like diamonds and gold
it isn't seducing me
it has nothing to sell

10

nothing at all

so don't even think about it

let jay z & horatio alger & general electric
blow your mind and take your money

don't even think about it

money talks
and money walks
and money keeps us entertained

20

it never kept us civilized
it's always been a game

made in china
made in vietnam
made in usa
look at your hands

OIL NINJAS

is there safety in these numbers?

C'EST CHEESE

30

a juicy double entendre
is that all you've got?
financial backing
luxurious production
is that all you've got?
knowing all the right people
taking your advantage
is that all you've got?

memory, yeah

reptiles
empire
is that all you've got?
20th century wounds still bleeding
is that all you've got?
suicide notebook
insect nest
schizoid with stress
is that all you've got?

40

paranoid
seeing visions 50
is that all you've got?
blue eyes talks to blue eyes
is that all you've got?
the stock exchange
cocaine exhaust
an oil slick in a parking lot
is that all you've got?

that's what i thought

TENNESSEE MIGHT TELL YOU A STORY
but DALLAS GON KILL YOU 60

while the drums address the classes

BELLADONNA

KILL THE FAMILY, SAVE THE SON

MY GENERATION'S
MARK DAVID CHAPMAN

belladonna

YOUNG PENNYROYAL
HOPPED UP
OVER THE WALL
TIRED OF REHAB
TRYING TO LEAVE HER 70

he didn't head to LA
where she liked to stay
at the peninsula
pharmaceutical ether

all the lies
the obvious forgery
the different handwriting on the note
even the blind could see
the highwaymen at work
canceling his credit cards
blue eyed royalty

80

STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

belladonna

september 1993
i lay down on the carpet
and fell asleep with headphones on
in the squall
like a storm of narcotics
all pain forgotten

90

nursing his stomach, he took a sip of her tea
ended up on the greenhouse floor

name dropping liza thorn
in 2014
and liza's only a little bit older than me

belladonna

THE GREAT SEC FINE IN THE SKY

the news is breaking
the storm is breaking
my head is aching

100

ASTRO TURF

these days the odds are looking even
find myself wishing for rain

the only excitement that gets your blood moving
are the chiefs the braves and the redskins

surrounded by electricity
air crackling with electricity

they generated more electricity than you could
ever dream of
harnessed more power than you've ever seen
i laugh at your new century

110

SEVEN BELLS

live my life
in urls
http
promptly
at seven bells

are we still connected?

would you even recognize me
in real life

where were you when i needed help?
was your nose against the mirror

120

i'm just swinging on a string again

why would i want to buy a guitar
that turns to ash
once a little time has passed

I CAN'T WAIT FOR TOMORROW

falsified
calcified
divided in half
by a thousand eyes

130

trust my friends
worth the wait
made an exception
to my fate

fuck your new york school
i do what i want when i
feel like it

my work is my work and you're never gonna see it
coming

SON OF OBITUARY

140

fuck you

fuck your trap

can't catch me, i'm the
gingerbread man

SUGARPLUM FAIRY
SUGARPLUM FAIRY
MARK DAVID CHAPMAN??
I'MA KEEP RUNNIN

dear god,
are you seriously telling me to go brand myself 150

NIKE
impossible victory, the world is my factory
you all work for me

NIKE
and on my tomb it will read
i sang about fields of green, countries and leaders

your culture looks good
i hope something grows soon
now i'm going to need another sample

THE UNITED STATES MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL 160
DRUM CORPS

i waited so long
for death from above
i'm not waiting anymore
i'm down here making love

MISS TENNESSEE

you look so poor
what's mine is yours
in twos and fours
and bars of sweet sixteen

170

gold bars from my arms to yours

here
listen here, listen here

when you drive
do at least about eighty-five
and when you arrive
i'll be singing that song
for you again

60s IDEALIZM

she is a flower child
in a rich man's garden
i spend my time sitting on the fence

180

in the outlying estates
the sun is going down

i watch them light the lamps
the roses turn blue and white
in the moonlight

MS. AMERICA

when i'm sad
i can talk to america

her arms like trees
are holding me

190

her fields of blonde
in the illinois blue

sugar in her hands
cotton on her back
tobacco in her pocket
gold around her neck

TALLEST PRETTIEST

her name is love

MY LITTLE PYRAMID

looking into the void
i saw advertising
i heard you laughing

200

looking into the future
i see our children swimming
in unfortunate decisions

i lost most of my twenties
will i hold on to my fifties
still trying to erect my little pyramid
make my children innumerable like stars

PAINTERS

210

bob ross, thomas kincade, michelangelo, and
me.

NOTES ON ‘THE JUNKMAN’S PILE MOVES TOWARD THE MUNITIONS FACTORY’

The title of this volume was taken from the heading of a magazine article about scrap metal and the war effort in a 1937 issue of LIFE magazine.

The cover is a detail from a group photo on the back of the Grateful Dead’s 1969 album “Aoxomoxoa.” Courtney Love has claimed that this is a picture of herself, although numerous sources have confirmed that it is actually Stacy Kreutzmann, the daughter of the band’s drummer.

The image on the first page is a piece of paper found in Courtney Love’s possession by Love’s lawyer, Rosemary Carroll, suggesting that its author was practicing how to mimic and reproduce the handwriting of her husband, Kurt Cobain.

This volume can be read as a single work or as discrete, individual poems. The interjected lines in all capitals may be read as titles indicating section breaks, or as phrases punctuating the overall continuity and capitalized only for emphasis.

Notes are provided by line number.

N.S.
February 2016

7. Cf. Nas in “Book of Rhymes”: “This can’t be my book of rhymes, writing this bullshit / Nah, never that.”

16. Jay-Z and Horatio Alger are two heroes of the great American rags-to-riches myth. General Electric provides entertainment through the media outlets it owns such as television network NBC, but is also a major defense contractor, which makes it fun to exploit the fact that it sounds like the name of a general in the army.

24. The sweatshops and child labor surrounding the manufacture of our cellphones and clothing are rarely on our minds when we wake up and check our email or decide what to wear; we have grown accustomed to a perpetual low-grade amnesia.

27. Military muscle and invisible ('ninja') economic maneuvering ensure profits from defense contracts and the plunder of Middle Eastern countries, but do these profits ultimately guarantee “security”?

30. Like ‘oil ninjas,’ ‘c’est cheese’ was a phrase that was written down as a possible song or band name and ended up as a title (or element) of this work instead. The following lines begin to interrogate the environment surrounding Kurt Cobain in the years and months leading up to his death, asking what the world has to offer, then or now.

38. Borrowed from the chorus of Nirvana's "Come As You Are." Cobain was conscious of the echo chamber of empty, recycled spectacle that passed for pop culture in his time; in "Pen Cap Chew," he sings: "This decade is the age of re-hashing."

52. I was obsessed for many years with the ubiquity of blue-eyed actors and actresses. The phrase "blue eyes talks to blue eyes" has become a personal shorthand for the homogeneity and predictability of popular media. Also, Cobain and Love both have blue eyes.

59. I always admired the Julian Casablancas line "Oh, Tennessee, what did you write?" and wanted to reply in kind. Tennessee being both a state and a playwright's name gives the line a great double meaning.

60. Drawing a parallel between John F. Kennedy's assassination in Dallas and Cobain's similarly suspicious shooting death.

61. A mysterious line that I could not get out of my head. Possibly an interpolation of "Music / mix the bourgeoisie and the rebel" from Madonna's "Music."

62. Courtney Love idolized Stevie Nicks; the title of (and first song on) Nicks's 1981 solo album is "Belladonna." Here I use the name to symbolize Love's poisonous nature.

63. A line from “Jennifer’s Body” by Hole, written by Love.

64. Mark David Chapman was the gunman who murdered John Lennon in 1981.

67. Referencing Cobain’s song “Pennyroyal Tea” and playing on the phrase “hopped up” – usually followed by a drug reference such as “on goofballs” – to refer instead to Cobain’s departure from rehab in 1994 by jumping over a wall.

72. After running away from rehab, Cobain didn’t go to see his wife at the fancy Peninsula hotel in Los Angeles where she was staying, flying immediately to Washington instead.

81. The timing of Love’s cancellation of her husband’s credit cards suggests sinister machinations.

83. Cobain’s dark, knotty love for his wife seems like a classic case of Stockholm Syndrome: the incarcerated man falling in love with his jailer.

85. When Nirvana’s “In Utero” was released I bought it on CD after school, took it home, and put it on headphones on the stereo in the living room, incredibly excited to listen to it for the first time. Lying on the floor, I somehow fell asleep during the second song (one of the loudest on the album) and didn’t wake up until the

final song, “All Apologies,” as if the music had sent me directly into a dream.

91. Cobain complained of persistent stomach problems. His body was discovered in a guest room above a greenhouse.

93. I was alarmed to see Courtney Love name-drop Liza Thorn, once part of a druggy, early-2000s San Francisco scene that I observed from its periphery, in a 2014 interview. Watching the strange, swift arc of people like Liza and realizing they’re about the same age as yourself can leave you rattled and wondering: am I supposed to be moving that fast?

97. A play on Pink Floyd’s “The Great Gig in the Sky.” These lines reflect my frustration at the laughable absence of repercussions or consequences for perpetrators of so-called white collar crimes such as the banking collapse, mortgage crisis, etc.

102. As a teenager my favorite lyric from the Mister T Experience was “the odds are pretty good, but the goods are pretty odd.”

105. The ghosts of the ancient ballgames of Mesoamerican and Native American peoples are visible in the anachronistic team names of our comparatively banal contemporary versions.

108. Some have argued (fascinatingly, but with varying degrees of actual science) that the pyramids functioned as conductors of electric energy.

111. This anachronistic naval method of marking time is used to highlight the movement between the ancient and the modern here as I begin to describe a life in which the majority of my time is spent in front of a computer screen.

121. It is always nice to find an image suggestive of both narcissism and cocaine use as the two typically go together anyway.

122. Implying both a pendulum-like movement in life and the act of wailin' on the guitar.

123. On the importance of lasting relationships, even with things.

126. On the frustrations of trying to be creative and independent.

140. After the examples of Lennon and Cobain, clearly one can become paranoid and furious in the defense of one's passions.

145. At the beginning of the recording session for

the Beatles’ “A Day in the Life,” John Lennon counts the song in by quietly chanting “sugar-plum fai-ry, sugar-plum fai-ry” in lieu of “one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four.”

149. I find it loathsome that my generation is assumed to have accepted the necessity of approaching life as a personal brand.

151. My name, Nicholas, is derived from the Greek word ‘nike,’ meaning victory; to brand myself is to walk in the shadows of a giant that has already claimed this word and its attending glory.

156. My interpolation of the epigram written by Virgil for his own tombstone.

162. “Death from above” is a phrase commonly associated in the American military with planes and helicopters bearing bombs, gunners, etc.

169. The numbers two, four, and sixteen all refer to musical tempo and notation, as Miss Tennessee is serenaded with gold ‘bars’ of music.

172. Borrowed from Roxy Music’s “The Space Between.”