

Kevin Connolly

Roots

For a moment Owen realizes some sense of loss, sitting there, cross-legged, his soiled hands reaching for another of the hundreds of tubers which are scattered across the cellar floor. The roots may well feel like disembodied limbs clutched in his chalky fingers. Chalk white earth red. Any way you look at it, an uneasy alliance. Owen breaks open this root and raises moist pieces to his nose.

An unpleasant smell. He breaks open that one, expending some effort this time. The smell could be described as earthy . . .

Owen's chalky fingers are green from twisting the torn ends of leaves into his hair. His fingers are green as they twist the strips of bark from the green branch. From one particular point in the room the scene is reminiscent of a lynching. The massacre of the innocents. Owen is scarcely two years old. Incapable of speech, Owen cannot apprehend some of the finer points of scent. Unable to speak he makes slight errors in judgement. Ignorant of language he overestimates the importance of the event, overestimates the importance of experience.

Yes. There can be no question that he has been misled by the immediacy of these potatoes. He has attached an inappropriate importance to cash and carry textures, to silence and its attendant ambiguities.

Perhaps we should be alarmed, as parents, lest Owen's behavior prove to be more than a momentary lapse into abstraction. The details *could* lead to more sordid conclusions. The details *could* lead to more expert might lead to conclusions like one light and the barometer of the truly rational three undue fascination with the roots of plants specifically designated for human consumption is a sure sign of infant delinquency. A twitch of personality which will no doubt be set in context later with some more mature psychosis all of which can probably be traced to some genetic aberration.

As convincing as this conclusion may be, there is always the possibility of an error in logic on our part yes one must acknowledge the possibility that Owen may have been enticed into folly, deliberately led astray by some as yet unacknowledged other. From a particular part of the room this does indeed seem plausible. Perhaps he is guided by some psychic imperative, a supernatural recommendation defying the constraints of a unified place and time. In this case Owen can only be considered guiltless yes if this second view should prove to be true Owen can be considered largely powerless, open to the influence of the environment a victim of suggestions from unseen strangers.

No.

No there is still no clear cause for Owen's fascination. Each explanation can be easily countered with an equally plausible counter-explanation. And Owen certainly is no explanation for his rising position rising on his hind legs from his heretofore source of suggestions.

TWO BRICKS

I smashed the bloody thing
with a baseball bat
it didn't fight back
I poured jello all over it
and turned down the heat
till the jello froze
then I pummelled it
with a sub-machine gun
and flew to Vegas for a week

When I returned
it was still breathing

I know that on each of my shoulders
sits a little man
their names are Ed and Ned
one's a good guy
the other looks like Jack Palance
they batter me about the ears
like bricks
I owe them nothing

Yeah, still breathing
and I had tried everything
so I couldn't come to peace with it
and put it on my head
Let the guys on my shoulders
worry about it

Stuart Ross

a Sesqui-monthly review

COMPLETE SUBJECTS AND PREDICATES

The complete predicate is the simple predicate
The complete subject is the simple subject

Example:

The young girls went
Monday was

He wanted

He practiced

boy was

Everyone was

heart was

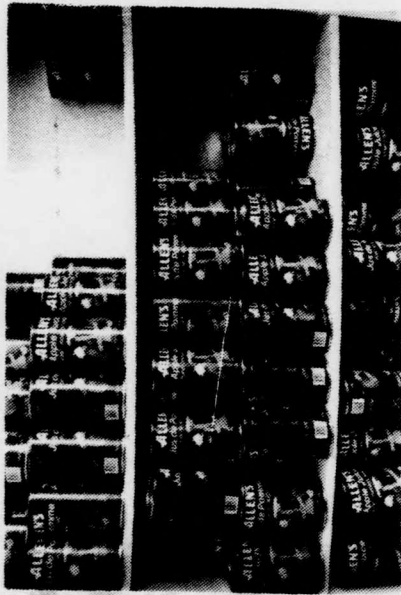
Somebody snickered

It sailed

boy felt

everyone cheered

gary blakclcy



Frankie Halls

Sweetman Come Home

Sweetman bringin love
drunk, drunk ah tell yuh,
one hot, black, rainy Saturday nite
to de board shac hidin
way bac in de cocoa feel.
The tree half dead dog in de yard ehn even bark.

Well, he an all cross de ten lil children
sleepin on de floor,
an head for de bed.

Dis time she sleepin with ah nex man
who jus ah few hours before
cross ovah de children too.
The only ting keepin dem apart so far
is the pitch black nite.

Sweetman stan up thinkin,
'Well, everyting good so far'.
He panse stan up in front im too,
an de ole rum start jumpin in e head.

Well, ah tell yuh.
Outside yuh could hear music.

Crapau an cricket playing mass
weep weep weep poonganak poonganak
weeee . . . weeee . . . weeee . . .
One o'clock in de mornin.
Santapee, scorpion, an snake chasin rat.

Porcupine an manicoou fightin in ah hog plum tree.
Yuh could smell de plum,
fus dey ripe.
Ah bat fly in an out de house
an make ah lil breeze ovah e head.

As e stan up e start tuh study e wife Carmen,
in de house jus up de road,
doun de hill.

She brown face full like ah moon,
An de long hair fallin on she big, wide bamsey.
Well, she she self thinkin,
'ah hope dat man eh comin home
with e arse full ah rum
tuh ride my arse tonite'.

Den all de cock start tuh crow
beside de woman jump

Betty's First Bike

It happened

It was the prettiest
I've ever seen

Nicholas Power