

BIG SISTER

POUND THE POET

Writers in a maud-a-lin mood turn their words to doggerel food
Such a crime is organized by rhyme, why even

e e cummings, Ferlinghetti, use bad grammar, word spaghetti
Critics swoon, it ain't the phase of moon ... quick! someone

Pound the poet, let him know it, welfare artist, verbal fartist
Pound pound pound pound! Run his poesy ships around
Pound pound pound pound!

Life of hardship, life forlorn, jus' writing jingles, rhyming oranges
Poets shun all college credit, rhyme or reasonable edit

Grab their books and barbecue 'em, add the head of Rod McKuen
Words ain't worth a wooden shilling, stop their thoughts, it's mercy killing

Pound the poet, don't forego it, poesy virus, ain't desire-us
Pound pound pound pound! Kill him with a proper noun
Pound pound pound pound!

Crambo clink and verse, assonance perverse, dithyrambs and worse, myth Erato's curse, stick
'em in a hearse!

Pound the poet, let her know it, bid her farewell, with a death knell
Pound pound pound pound!

*In the forest was a tree. And me
The tree fell, and squashed a katydid
At least I think it did. It's hard to tell*

Because I was looking the other way, and heard only the anguished insect say yeow!

Pray for writer's block, force feed 'em hemlock, conk 'em with a rock, throw 'em off the dock,
use electroshock

Pound the poet, don't forego it, ply some torment, make him dormant
Pound pound pound pound! Make it last or he'll rebound
Pound pound pound pound!

*A poem endowed with heavenly grammar
Evokes thoughts as subtly as a sledgehammer
But when wielded haughtily by some guy in a beret
The world must wait till the noxious words fade away*

Pound the poet!

*You'll never be more free, than with a poetic lobotomy
'Cause shortly thereafter, your head will forever fill up with laughter! Ha ha!*

Pound the poet!

Verb hyperbole; mental chimpanzee; better dead than me; c'est la merde, mai oui; mawkish
harmony; rhymes will set me free; dramatic debris; gosh such irony!

*Ma-ma-maybe when poems are sublime, and full of pastoral slime
I'll finally meet my oracle, or something less allegorical
Like gossamer battle axes, sudden death and taxes
Or worse, god forbid, like what happened to that poor katydid!*

Pound the poet!

Pound pound pound pound! Lose him in a lost and found
Pound pound pound pound!

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HUMERUS

The bone in my arm is the humerus, it is my funny bone
The bone is not dry, bone dry
It's surrounded by flesh, i.e. muscular and fatty tissue, which is very wet, indeed.
So, if someone, perhaps a chap you know only slightly, says
"You have a dry sense of humerus"
He obviously never acquainted himself with Gray's Anatomy
Unless he forgot – because your humerus is wet!

TORTILLA ESPAÑOL

Se venden sellos aqui?
No la coma usted, gracias, continuo gritando.
Por favor, no beba la leche
Me duela la espalda
Hombre al agua! Cuantas veces? Tiene coche y todo. Se me va la cabeza.
Las patatas estan a tres pesetas.
Todo el mundo arriba, se me escapo el tren!
Tortilla, tortilla español. Cuidado, no comprendo. No me de el aceite!
Tortilla español. Vaya con que si!
(Do you sell stamps here? Don't eat it, thank you, he kept on shouting. Please don't drink the milk. My back aches. Man overboard! How often? He even has a car. I feel dizzy. Potatoes are selling at three pesetas. All hands on deck! I just lost the train! Omelets, Spanish omelets. Oh, be quiet. I don't understand. Don't give me the oil. Spanish omelets. Well, well, you don't say!)

IT'S ONLY COFFEE

The scientists are all wrong. They tell us we shouldn't drink coffee and other highly caffeinated beverages because it makes us nervous, because it causes cancer in laboratory rats, and also dysentery in certain conditions. Well, I am living proof of this utter nonsense. I have been drinking three quarts of coffee or a similarly caffeinated beverage every day for 20 years or more now, or more. And do I seem the worse for wear? No! In fact, coffee seems to have a positively calming effect on me, and given the awful pressures of my job, I should by now have disintegrated into a shivery, shuddering nervous wreck. But do I look like a nervous wreck? *I said, do I look like a nervous wreck?* Hey! Are you listening to me? I asked you a question! Yeah, well why should I care if you respond. This isn't even your concern, except that I'm going to *make* it your concern, just so you'll know the truth about coffee and other highly caffeinated beverages, and how utterly ... utterly

You, there! Do *I* look like a nervous wreck? Or perhaps you think it's all in my head! That I'm, I'm ... oh, what's the word? I'm some sort of a neurotic, a maladjusted psychoneurotic, yet, who's transferring para ... paresthesia? No. Yes! To conceal emotional instability, and hog cholera. Delusions of grandeur, you say? Exhibiting anti-social behavior? Ha! And don't

Don't hand me that gestalt crap. I've had enough analysis, with a capital A, to last a lifetime! Therapy? You name it: psycho, shock, dream analysis, hypnotic suggestion, galvanometrics, hypoglycemic – I've had it all! And don't forget drugs! I've taken endogenous opiates, tryptophan, beta-endorphins, the mysterious Substance P, furniture polish, and hundreds and

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hundreds more! And all I got out of it was spastic dyskinesia and an uncontrollable urge to drink even *more* coffee. So don't try and tell *me* I shouldn't have any more coffee today! Coffee, coffee, coffee!

Maybe you can't handle it, but I ... I can, I can I can I can I can I can I

I'VE BEEN VACUUM-CLEANERED, BABY

I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, a major frontal lobotomy
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, I'm an unreasonable facsimile
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, my memories have gone up in smoke
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, my body's here, my mind's in Roanoke
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, electroshock has set me free
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, and I come with a six-month warrantee
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, life and death are mostly a blur
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, don't know if I'm a him or a her
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, my stockpile of Valium is vast
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, my future's gone but so is my past
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, the status quo is what I embrace
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, between my ears it's like outer space
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, my body's free, my mind's in a cage
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, I'm happy now with minimum wage
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, the doctors have dismantled my brain
I've been vacuum-cleanered, baby, the pleasure's gone, but so is the pain.

COLD FRONT

There's a cold front coming through.
Those are nice clouds! Look at them!
Wait! They're ganging up on us!
No they're not, it was my imagination.
Ooh, hear the wind? Well I do.
Yep, there's a cold front coming through and I think it might be chilly tonight.
Better put another log on the fire and air out the blankets.
Anyone got a match?
I still say it's a cold front coming through.
What strange clouds. They look like commas, or semi-colons
Punctuating the cool azureness which token reality brings, yes!
And so, the sky is blue, except for the clouds
I tell you it's true, I wouldn't lie or anything.
Ooh, there's a front coming through.
It's cold, so cold
But if the weather didn't change every now and then,
Life would be, it would be ...
Life, and that's too bad.
Yeah, there's a cold front, and it's coming, it's coming through
For you and 63 million other people, coming through.

BIG SISTER

BIG SISTER

I admit it. I was a deprived child. I didn't have interesting playthings. I didn't have a very healthy allowance. And I certainly didn't have a comprehensive musical education. Today, that's all changed. Today, all I have to do is plug in a computer cartridge, press a few buttons, and presto!, I'm musically literate! All I have to do is dream up a nifty melody, one that anyone can hum, and I'm in business! This is particularly useful in music that's relevant to modern times. Big Sister is such a piece, and we'd like to do it for you right now. Thank you. By the way, should you be thinking of leaving this performance a bit early – to beat all of the hospital traffic – let me take this opportunity to warn you about the stairs outside. Specifically, the third step from the bottom. See, the recent weather hasn't been particularly kind to it and it could collapse at any time. Just so you know that we're not in any way liable for injuries. Thank you. Now, let's see? Where was I? Oh, yeah ...

Freedom is slavery, war is peace

Ignorance is strength, and snow is white as fleece

All right, let's take these concepts one at a time, look 'em over, see what they mean.

Freedom is slavery.

Hey, dude, that's just a totally awesome concept, "freedom is slavery," yeah, I guess I never looked at it that way before. "Freedom is slavery" – listen, I can really relate to ... it's excellent, yeah!

War is peace.

Now this one, though, this one really gags me out. I mean, how can ...

War is peace

War is peace? Nah, forget it!

Ignorance is strength

All right, now this notion is like totally bizarre. Like, I always thought that ignorance was bliss, you know? And now they're sayin' it's strength? Well, no way, man, can I equate strength with bliss. I mean ...

Ignorance is strength

Ignorance is strength? Admittedly though, it's sort of a bitchin' concept, conceptually speaking.

And snow is white as fleece

Now this is just rhetorical metaphor, so forget it.

Big Sister

Big Sister, Jumbo Mama, Digital Aunt Zoe, whatever you want to call her, she's the Chief of the Fleece, the Matriarch of Monomania, for today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, and beyond. She's the one you're uneasy about, the one you're always lookin' over your shoulder for to see if she's lookin' for you back. Believe me, she's there, and she's lookin' for you right back. And if you don't believe me, just ask anyone, anyone who's ready Joseph Campbell.

Ooo, Campbell.

All right, let's recap now.

Freedom is slavery, war is peace

Ignorance is strength and snow is white as fleece.

Yeah, that's the way it is, all right, and that's the end of our little tune.

Big Sister.

Big Sister. Thank you. Think it'll satisfy the Saint Salmon's Board of Directors? How about the genial Dr. Trampolino? The guard? The nurse? Anyone? Freedom, war, ignorance, snow.

BIG SISTER

C'mon, give me a break. I only have so many brains, you know, and these people play for keeps.
So how about a little

Big Sister

And the snow was white as fleece, I know. Yeah, thanks.

COSMIC DANCE

Cracks in the sky, squirrels in my shoes / never a witchman walk
Ferns in the bathtub, giggles on my mind / how I wish teeth could talk
Pie tins from outer space, never mind the freight / ship 'em off to Paris France
Wrap our rattle 'round a Piccadilly postcard / do that Cosmic Dance.

Trinkets now in Kansas, lost my five an' dime, / properly attired no more
Missed the shuffle bus, Krakatoan high / down by the deep blue floor
Window pains are wiggling, falling feet asleep / fig trees are wearing pants
Toaster oven think tank, déjà vu again / doin' the Cosmic Dance.

Easy as a word, straight as the crow / happy as a nervous wreck
Banking hours ending, rental monies gone / will the Piper take a check?
Mind under matter, horn a hurry honk / squint your eyes into a trance
Warping color graphics on the Zonule of Zinn / let 'em do their Cosmic Dance.

Mrs. Inspiration forgets me all I know, / tells me tales I don't dare write
Half-baked prophesies, closets full of seeds / into the din of night
Pie tins, the cosmos, evidently linked, / universal truth by chance
Gamblers, charlatans, buzzards in for tea / doin' the Cosmic Dance.

Lint in my pocket, wallet full of dust, / tightrope hanging downside up
Witchman walking which way, hitch a hobbyhorse / dyin' for a soupcon cup
Fleece bags and artisans, curdled clouds above, / uncles very close to ants
Knock wood, spinal tap, apiary hums, / rhythms of the Cosmic Dance.

Future prospects livin' in the past / here and now but never home
Okmurm, Ikzith, Archeau on the road / lookin' for the one true roam
Eight an' thirty old man, gravy in his veins, / wicked warp and woof he rants
Abstract appetite, Armageddon cheers, / talkin' 'bout that Cosmic Dance!