

IN AN  
ATTIC PALACE  
BENEATH A  
SLAUGHTERED  
SKY

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New York



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## Fairytale

Having forgotten  
all of the fairytales  
that had been told  
to me in my youth  
I decided to find  
an antiquarian  
who was well  
versed in the dusty  
tomes that make up my life.

The finding of such  
a person was achieved  
far more easily  
than I had hoped.  
It was my desire  
to learn more  
than a few things  
along the way.  
The pursuit being  
the perfect  
teacher of things passed.  
I had packed my bags  
for the long journey.  
Sadly, I am no hero  
of Greek proportions,  
and this in spite  
of the fire  
that I had swallowed  
on the boardwalk  
at Coney Island  
as Homer looked on laughing.

When I stepped out of  
of my eighth story  
balcony I fell upon  
a stake that had  
just been set-up that

very day. Being  
that no substantial  
damage was caused  
by my impalement,  
the owner was delighted  
at my arrival.  
In fact such an arrival  
was what he had often  
longed for, and in  
setting up shop in such  
an unfamiliar neighborhood  
he was vindicated  
in the one great dream  
that had consumed  
him for so many years.

From the look of surprise  
on my face after such  
a clean collapse, devoid  
of anything more  
than a minor loss of blood,  
he could immediately  
discern what I had  
dropped in for.

There it was, dusty  
and frayed,  
just the way that I  
had imagined it.  
Opening the book  
I laughed at the cautionary  
tales that I had once  
held sacred, but with  
age had come  
to disregard.

All the dead and dying  
faces of the children  
who had far less  
luck than I with

scissors and matches  
lay waiting for the grave.  
The tall shopkeeper  
could not help  
but shout with delight  
and amazement while  
slicing a thick  
piece of salami  
on the counter.  
He asked if I would like  
to join him for lunch.  
How could I refuse?

We laughed at all  
of the saccharine stories  
that are fed to youths  
these days on dry  
pieces of toast, and of  
how when push  
comes to shove  
these same children  
are snipped  
from life's long lie  
by sharp scissors.  
We gave great grins  
at the babes  
who go up in flames  
laughing at the orange  
glow and blistering  
skin not realizing  
that the end is the only  
cause for the beginning.

My stomach full,  
I climbed the fire escape  
back up to the eighth story  
promising the antiquarian  
to return the next day,  
but the following morning  
when I slammed down



onto the street  
he was no longer there  
though the spike remained.  
We had both  
achieved what  
we had wanted,  
and that being  
the case there was no  
reason to stick around  
and watch for what  
would happen next.

## Razor for Rimbaud

I prefer scum, gunrunner,  
    slave trader, pimp,  
    customer service rep,  
    switchblade slicer  
through Times Square castrating  
    tourists and lights,  
    crooked cabbie  
    lacking change,  
9<sup>th</sup> Avenue whore, Coney Island  
    clown, busker  
    on the 3 a.m. train,  
scheister, charlatan, tarot card  
    reader in shop  
    front window,  
bloody butcher, moaning cow,  
    Meat Packing District  
    hostess to the stars,  
    blowjob queen and evangelist  
over all precious and impotent  
poets of pristine days.

I take shits on presidents,  
    premiers  
and potentates in Park Avenue  
hedge fund counting houses.  
I set fire to the classics  
    and classrooms,  
they're all the same to me,  
which is nothing.  
I fly into the crowd  
to spin around  
    with knuckles  
ready to bleed.

This is the razor song to sheer  
the wallowing words from the page.



of plunging skies

passing for heaven  
they are the failings of the land  
the subjects of brief laughs  
in their eternity  
that falls far short of the price paid

I with the murderers  
see the antique stars  
in the skies  
that have already died

bright wishes are being pimped  
in spite of it all  
to the mothers in their labor pains

## At the Other End of the Line

At the other end  
of the line  
where the train  
finds fulfillment  
in the death  
of it travels  
the passengers  
are waiting  
for an airplane,  
unsatisfied.  
No doubt  
they will demand  
a flight to the moon  
by the time  
the day is done.  
That's of no concern  
to the conductor  
who has his knife  
at the ready.  
Once the railroad  
fulfilled further  
ambitions  
that ended  
in seasickness  
and a fear  
of submarines.  
Now it's nothing,  
but nothing  
is greater than  
the disappointment  
of looking up  
at clouds  
hurrying by.

## **Sheepshead Bay**

The hallowed scum of the sea quivers. Your children fear too many things while sleeping with stingrays on winter nights. They shock you and everyone else who run to the city for solstice. Your children are the fishers of fish and should never indulge in greater ambitions. Your womb is a seashell where you hide sound and bury my scissors. The boardwalk lusts for Sheepshead Bay.

## Tilt-a-Whirl

The drop  
of a brick, tilt-a-whirl thrill.  
The songstress has no voice,  
never had, and that's  
    the short and long of it  
    in chit-chat  
under the boardwalk,  
out of the sun  
where they're promising fun.  
Still, one show is pretty  
    much the same as the next,  
especially for me, never one  
    for discernment.  
All of the degrees of summer  
    didn't matter in September  
    and mattered all the less  
by the time that the spring came  
    and February said goodbye.  
No vocal coach.  
No concern for all the suitors  
    to be.  
No worry about harmony or dissonance.  
Let's sway into the jackhammer age  
and lend a hand to the hydraulic masturbator  
while Salvation Army ladies work their wrists  
    knowing that Christmas  
    is always right around the corner.  
There are no venial sins here.  
Each and every act is mortal.  
Bright glare the days fade beneath amusement's  
    lights.