

In *the*... et al

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In

By Richard Weaver

WHY I LIKE IT: *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... Nothing quite as exciting as cataloguing (a literary device no less) random lists, records, indexes, registries, directories. In the 'In the...' Weaver does just this in an amusing, superlative, comparative epigrammatic style. "In the . . . / . . . city of mirrors, no one looks for someone else." 'Inertia Accumulates' is pretty heady stuff, "Unless you shampoo with paradox. "Something tells me Richard rooted for Wile E. Coyote: "And these leeks are to be the centerpiece of a dish your wife, / the woman who cups your testicles, is making for someone whose name you have / forgotten since you left wherever it is you think you live." "In fact, dumb was founded exactly where you are standing..." And, his finale, 'Magic 8-Ball...' is sidesplitting hysterical. (To maintain poet's spacing each poem is on its own page.) HS*

-- In the . . .

- . . .city of mirrors, no one looks for someone else.
- . . .world of low-lying fog, everyone is a stop sign unseen.
- . . .land of vegetables rot abounds.
- . . .coliseum there is an infinity of no-see-ums.
- . . .city of dogs, no bark goes unanswered.
- . . .glass city, bulls roam wild in the streets.
- . . .city of the sun, one state blinds.
- . . .glare of the butcher's cleaver all bone is paper.
- . . .dark web, no light shines.
- . . .city of human stupidity, there are no limits or boundaries.
- . . .Boulevard of Heart Attacks, ambulances crawl.

Inertia Accumulates

in the darkest corners on an otherwise stillborn party. Decked out in a dark matter lampshade, the usual, failed drag disguise, Inertia is content, or as content as possible, being present in the past, and looks forward to future, if unknowable, appearances. No Schrodinger's cat is it/he/she/them. Such thinking requires actual ertia. Inertia may have its clubhead limits which it's obliged to ignore, but true to form it knows limits are a necessary barrier, at least for neutron and strange stars, although, it cautions, there are many strange star parties that are anything but cosmically dull. And thus worth attending, if only remotely, afterwards, by proxy, or later unearthed via hypnosis. To Hell with the Crab Pulsar and its rigid inertia, so says Inertia. How can there be moments for inertia? Unless you shampoo with paradox. Or contradiction. Or both. Semi-simultaneously. Inertia has only one thing to say on this matter, but it is unable to do so, due to too many unanswered, previous non-observational, non-maximal moments.

Jack Robinson. Say it again. Faster.

Quicker now. Faster than that. You're not even trying.
Let it rip. JACKROBINSON. Say it as if the dogs of Hell
were sniffing your week-old shorts and found them irresistible.
Lightning fast, let your tongue flash and flame. Jack!
Mr. Jack Robinson to you. The one. The only. The only one.
Quicker than quick and that thimble guy.
He's a fraud. Don't get me started. Just say it.
Say it the way I taught you. Say it and be done.

Lost in thought are we,

meaning me and the you that is me, my wife having sent us the two of us to gather from the market, one of the daily farmer's markets that sprout up around town like I don't know what. But they are there

and we are as well like weeds almost, around always, except that we need them. You want what they have and are willing to give them shiny objects and pieces of paper in exchange for green and yellow and orange and purple and maybe even red things that reek of dirt but are born from star debris.

And perhaps some other colors that slip in under the spectrum. But they are ours to be had for what you have if you think that what they have and what you want is worth your having it. Higher math if you know what I mean. And so you stand and maybe you talk and perhaps you touch things

in front of you but not in an overly friendly way, so as not to bruise or cause harm or injury in such a way that might involve the police or social workers. BUT NOW YOU REMEMBER: your mission, your purpose was to hunt and gather, to buy Leeks. But not just any leeks. The recipe called for those

preferred by the Emperor Nero, either in soup or sautéed in oil, and not just any oil. Oil not left over from battles and not hurried over walls. Preheated yes. But not burned. And these leeks are to be the centerpiece of a dish your wife, the woman who cups your testicles, is making for someone whose name you have

forgotten since you left wherever it is you think you live. And so you have gone in search of the national emblem of Wales though you are ignorant of emblems and Wales and even leeks. Even so you would not be caught alive or dead wearing one on your head. Still, leeks it is and leeks it must be. You soldier onward

and outward, elsewhere and elsewhen, beyond and because, and finally arrive at the farmer's market, where booth after booth, and stall upon stall, are all filled with the greenest and whitest of leeks. You are amazed. Dumbfounded. In fact, dumb was founded exactly where you are standing

with your eyes wide and your mouth open, open enough for flies and gnats and mosquitoes and the odd moth to enter. You are in leek nirvana. You have only to choose and be released. Your purpose, your life's mission is nearly complete. All that remains is to find what the Emperor preferred;

after-all, what was good enough for the Emperor might, just might be good enough for your wife, your mate, your significant other, other half and/or better, rib, lady (old or otherwise), mate, bride, helpmeet, woman, wedded one, goodwife. If only you could remember her name. Or where you once might have lived.

Magic 8-Ball: Twenty-sided responses to polar questions: An update

1. Take two of everything in the morning, but don't ever call me again
 2. All things suggest you boldly suck the barrel of a trigger-happy shotgun
 3. Death is a viable option
 4. Your mother was a frozen lobster
 5. Sad to say, your mule father denies you exist
 6. Sure. Maybe. Why not. Perhaps. NOPE on a rope
 7. I'd be lying if I said maybe
 8. As if expecting an intelligent answer from a convex regular icosahedron wasn't asinine enough
 9. There's less talent in the grief you call art than in your yellow, untrimmed toenails
 10. Please shave your hairy ass before speaking to me again
 11. For you later is never. Deal with it
 12. Aren't you a special snowflake!
 13. All the constellations laugh at your continued existence
 14. You are mortally challenged. Thank God.
 15. Yes. You're the stain of a drydream.
 16. Could you be more graphically specific?
 17. You're a single-footed duck swimming counterclockwise.
 18. Yeah. Yaaaaas. Yiss. Yep. Yup. Yeeeeees. Yessssss. Meaning NOOOOOOOO.
 19. Warm your hands before you cup my singularly magnificent testicle
- Please click your heels and return to machine-readable formats

THE POET SPEAKS: *The Word according to Gaspode the Wonder dog who like all of us is plagued by Microserf Word's Calibri 11 point default. Gaspode appears in no less than 7 of Terry Pratchett's 42 Discworld books. He is a small dog with a large attitude. His best quote: "being a short dog is not good the ol' wosnames." Highly worth the effort. Stop reading this now, and buy all you can of these books, and read them even after the covers come loose and the spines break. Highlighting or underlining is a personal choice. The question obviously left to be asked is WHAT? A British fantasy writer, now dead, is an influencer? An inspiration?*

I rediscovered Russell Edson's poetry in the winter of 2016, 2 years after his death. 39 years after I had encountered a diamond-tipped chainsaw of poets and poetry in an undergrad class. His poetry disappeared as new poets appeared. It was slash and burn. The last poet standing was whoever ended the semester. Fast forward to 2016. I have two authors in heavy rotation: Lynn Tillman and Lydia Davis. Fiction writers. Both woke my inner Rip Van Winkle. When I read an interview with Lydia D in which she stated that she did not learn how to write fiction at the Iowa Writer's program, I was intrigued. When she further stated that when she read the prose poems of RE,

something clicked, a torch flared, a seismic fault shifted. Something fell into place. Clearly I had been sent a hint in print. As someone who has haunted bookstores since I was a teenager, who later managed a bookstore in the heart of the French Quarter, who later open his own store, and who later became a librarian and archivist and had access to books >500 years old, I got the hint and went a-googling. Books arrived and I read. I took one, The Selected poems to my bar of choice on a happy afternoon. Opened it randomly and began reading. Immediately I began writing. 2 hours and 10 new poems, poems like nothing I had ever written before, appeared. Next day 8 more. 5 years later 479 have been completed. 141 published. Nothing more to say. Except, other poems in other series came along as well. 80 poems based on the last words of people of note. A growing series related to Baltimore, including a series of Rat poems. Another series that refuses to be categorized. And the odd poem that resists classification. It was a rebirth. And still is.

AUTHOR BIO: The author volunteers with the Maryland Book Bank, CityLit, the Baltimore BookFestival, and was the writer-in-residence at the James Joyce Pub. Recentpubs: FRIGG, Mad Swirl, Spank the carp, Adelaide, Dead Mule, and Magnolia Review. He's the author of The Stars Undone (Duende Press, 1992), and provided the libretto for a symphony, OfSea and Stars (2005), performed 4 times to date. Recently he published his 125th {Ir}Rational Narrative, aka prose poem.