

## Steve Potter

*Witches & Devils: Albert Ayler*  
(From *LISTEN: Poems Written With Headphones On*)

I.  
squeaky door dour disney barnfart  
and here come the camels  
and here come the bats  
and wallabees wildebeasts wesleyans

oh excuse me  
i thought you were someone's elves  
old ex used me  
i bought sewer gun foam shelves

armpit godzilla  
you've stricken the blind dog deaf  
and here come the camels

squeaky door dour disney barnfart

farm tit gorilla  
you stick in the kind hog's cleft  
and here come the camels

and beer scum enamels  
were someone's elves  
odd sex you seed me  
i bought sewer gun foam shelves  
and wallabees wildabeasts wesleyans

hear scum in flannels  
grunge show way back when

remember the alamo  
rental car crash  
by j g ballard  
is a favorite of mind  
over mata hari  
houdini thought  
he was so fucking cool

II.

wow ziggity zag  
a squirrely spiral  
i want to ride like a slide  
into some amniotic ooze  
of a hallucinational pastime

are these your doughnuts?  
i want to read like a steed  
in two slum and idiotic zoos  
gloved balushi in national lampoon's....  
never mind

wow ziggity zag  
a squirrely spiral  
i want to ride like a slide  
into some amniotic ooze  
of a hallucinational pastime

are these your dour nuts  
squeaking like doors  
in a disney barnfart?

are these helium balloons?  
are these heroin bassoons?

the horses are talking in the field of wind  
and the cows glub on the grass like  
what happens to you in your cubicle at work

the whore says, "is our talking in the field of wind  
and the cows glubbing on the grass like  
what happens to you in your cubicle at work?"

the whore says, "these are helium balloons,  
these are heroin bassoons."

the dream said, "follow the spirit.  
remember and follow the spirit.  
always follow the spirit."

and i have ever since.

**Archery (Disk 2): John Zorn**  
**(From LISTEN: Poems Written With Headphones On)**

ouch, this hemoglobin fire  
is spiriting the green soup  
right out of my soul!

no, i mean it, right out of my soul!

there that's better. the strap was too tight.

i'd like these people to leave now honey  
these friends of yours these these these  
people  
honey  
dear  
sweetums  
i'd like them  
to go now  
with their steep flaming dirigibles  
and cocktail weenies and and and  
all the rest of it all this this this  
stuff of theirs squeaking diaphanous splendid hallucinatory mind goop dripping into  
snowy eternity like so many yeti sightings at a shit-head convention.

i mean i don't mean to come across mean but but but was that my phone was that my  
cell phone and who the fuck brought the horse?!?

i'd like these people to leave now honey  
these friends of yours these these these  
people  
honey  
dear  
sweetums  
i'd like them  
to go now  
with their guillotine fillings and fliers about filigreed party favors suntanning in  
the dead of fucking night like so many blind lemon jefferson fans parading naked in  
front of the pope.

i mean i mean i mean ya gotta crack the shells before ya scramble the eggs, heavens to bacon, for pete's ache!

okay okay okay maybe it's me maybe i need some medicine maybe i need another drink maybe the hemoglobin levels are causing the fire song to sing anew from the bleeding spiney nipples of my third ass or something but really where'd i leave that extra bottle of tequila?

sharp as the buttons on a cauliflower that's what i'd call it. sherpa-like in their dexterous ambivalence, these bland cauldrons of deeply perfumed schizoid shepherding neophytes tickle my innermost exteriors with a subtle dynamism scarcely seen in today's farming community.

*where indian fights are colorful sights  
and nobody takes a lickin!*

*"shultz, shultz!"  
"aye, herr commandant!"*

oh cavernous soupy tank filled with pointless memories your scorpions are scrambling the helium divers like shipyard thugs piled six at a time into a phone booth like nineteen fifties fratboys in a LIFE magazine photo.

phone booth? it was like a box you'd stand inside of to use the pay phone. you'd put a nickel in or later a dime or later a nickel and a dime or later a quarter or later two quarters and dial the phone and make your call. because they had wires. everything had wires then and everything was big so we couldn't carry them in our pockets.

oh i don't know, baby. things change. my head used to be much larger for instance but then they installed this shunt and.....

some kind of dangerous experiment with experts and cleopatra salesmen firing their pistols drunkenly into the night sky during the beauty pageant. and now the gas-masters pilgrim the fat man forward through the doors for his wine commercial.

*"mister french, mister french!"*

who's sarcophagus is this anyway?

they were tossing gerbil grenades into the neighboring territory like scurrilous sharecroppers blasterfitting the semen canopy with creamcicle-scopes and hormone

gasses. is that you honey? they were bullyfucking the hamster god with helium snacks and gyrosopic pilgrim farts like so many toastmasters mastering their toast- making at the greatest goddamn aardvark convention you could ever imagine.

and then that horrible theremin accident spoiled the mood for everyone.

i'd like these leaves to honey people now

these fiends of ours these these these

pitbulls

money

queer

sweetbuns

i dyke ten

goats now

with their steep flaming dirigibles

and cocktail weenies and and and

all the rest of it all this this this

stuff of theirs squeaking diaphanous splendid hallucinatory mind goop dripping into snowy eternity like so many yeti sightings at a shit-head convention.

and that fine marbled cranium splendid as the spittoon of god him/her/itself

**Janus: Sun Ra**

**(From Listen: Poems Written With Headphones On)**

and now we go forward  
a shoe shine on the corner  
and the paper boy passes whistling

*little Jackie Paper lived by the sea*

piano keys rain from the samba sky  
falling like orioles dying from air pollution

snake charmer in gravity boots hanging upside down

*keep a knockin but you can't come in  
keep a knockin but you can't come in*

open the door it's room service

shelf life of a brain  
shelf life of a thought  
and the people in the parking lot  
are carrying instruments toward the building

mad tropical birds and purple-assed mandrills  
complaining from the branches overhead  
the babboondocks and monkeyrinas of banana boats  
and the bacon bats are soaring through the open sky

now something scientific is happening  
in a laboratory in the belly  
of a hollowed out mountain

the mad scientist paces mentally  
exploring the inner reaches of sound  
as his hunchbacked assistant  
nods off in the corner

*paging doctor benway  
paging doctor benway*

the crepuscular toad hovers  
in the nearly gelatinous green haze  
of a junkie's ancient dream

oh pardon me  
i must have entered the wrong womb  
please excuse the pistaccio shells

distant lights on a tower  
or lights on a distant tower  
it is difficult to interpret the drums  
exactly sometimes and the boy wondered  
why his father was often so angry  
hovering in the nearly gelatinous green haze  
of a drunkard's ancient genes

horseradish sauce for example with  
bells and cicadas constituting  
some kind of mutinous preamble

prunes and purple-assed scientists  
entered the wrong room and fiddled  
with the spaghetti intern's diarrhea diorama

or was that the other time when they were  
in ethiopia together fishing for golf swings  
and mood swings and mood rings and pet rocks

*roxanne you don't have to wear that dress tonight*  
the elephants are charging over the hill  
and dale evans is wearing her idiotic cowgirl hat  
looking the silly old woman as ever

and here's johnny gargling with hot soup  
as children splash in puddles  
with oily rainbows slicking their surfaces

now it's that fat guy  
coming in for his pudding again  
like that time in selma, alabama  
with the phlebotomist and his wife

no wait that wasn't it

jackolantern smiles amid hickory switches  
jackolantern smiles among cornstalks

bacon and donuts or bacon donuts  
origami bacon donuts  
and feelings about wheels  
wordless child eyes the world

there are no rules  
until someone makes up rules

once upon a timid stranger  
the pillowbookmaker placed the bed bet

the elephants have returned  
accompanied by trumpeter swans  
and trombonist ducks casting  
a saxophonetic spell injury

now he is telling us about it  
dishes rattling in the kitchen  
as the gentle earthquake folds  
the city like a napkin on the lap  
of a geriatric patient  
who has forgotten her name

the blisters are popping  
all over the kingdom

please send geraniums  
and inflate the gerbils  
for jean-paul belmondo  
who runs down the paris street  
bleeding, dying, trailed by jean sebirg

i think the canopy is full of seed now  
and the purple-assed mandrills inflate

now he is telling us about it:  
the gentle earthquake is not  
gentle on human terms but  
quite tame on god terms

he is telling us about it now  
for jean-paul and jean  
and the inflated gerbils  
rattling in the kitchen  
like a forgotten napkin

the elephants have returned  
to make the new rules

**Aman Iman (Water Is Life): Tinariwen**  
**(From: LISTEN: Poems Written With Headphones On)**

flood me with sound. let's build buildings of sand and leper skin. go now find the sparrows. bring the leper skin and the lizard skin. we shall fill the buckets with sand as the ancient ones look on.

distances. horizons. weather.

valiant efforts. everything but here is far away from here.

now me, take me for example, i live in this magical land many dream of where you can drive an automobile to a glowing box at any time of the day or night and purchase a dreadful little burrito for less than a dollar and not even get out of the car to walk in and get it. take out window. land of magical mysteries. land of cheap meat.

flood me with sound. let's build buildings of hemoglobin and the leftover face paint of dead mimes.

whose mommy sheds the sleds from the roof of the world? her mommy sheds the sleds from the roof of the world! let's build buildings.

a carpenter, the son of god, and it's his birthday so people are buying things for one another, but no, it's not his birthday. the scientists say his birthday must have been in june. makes sense he'd be a cancer, somehow. lets build buildings of cheap meat and magical mysteries in honor of the son of god, the desert carpenter.

i'll gather the cheesecloth from behind the cheese place and you go gather the discarded wine bottles from the recycling bin behind that yuppie condo and let us begin building the magical mystery cheap meat church of the desert carpenter in the empty lot where that house burned to the ground last year.

constant self-abuse, but i don't mean masturbation i mean the constant self-critical chatter in my mind. pollution of the worst kind. left over protestant bullshit, i think. get off your back, man. let it go.

and now a caravan of camels across the sand from one oasis to another. blind lemon jefferson is among them, among the sighted lime washingtons.

a glandular problem which ballooned the preacher's boy up like a helium blimp. he did in fact float away and explode in the sky above the village raining his insides, blood and guts and feces and bits of bone and cartilage, down on them all who'd talked ill of him. all agreed it was a miracle. a really disgusting, foul-smelling miracle, but a miracle nonetheless. the lord works in mysterious ways and all that crap.

what the fuck are we doing here? this whole earth trip is a huge freaking bugout, if you stop to think about it, but few ever do.

i've at times convinced myself that my inability to ever make a substantial income and live something more like a middle class american lifestyle is a sign of my moral superiority but at times of greater clarity i understand that that is indeed a load of self-serving bullshit, that i'm really just a massive fuck-up.

but i'm not really doing the thing, here. this is just some journal rantings while listening to music, this isn't the music inspiring the writing. but oh well so what, rant. because i'm fucked again.

this is supposed to be the big payoff time when the past two years of working my ass off pays off big, the big christmas season that pays big and keeps me afloat financially on into the summer. and of course we're in the midst of the worst recession since the great fucking depression and christmas sales were fucking dismal for everyone including myself and i'm almost certainly gonna have to go back to work for the man who is in fact a machine to support this biz that's supposed to be supporting my writing and the book biz is fucking tanking too so assuming i ever even fucking finish *days of labor & barroom nights* or any of the other fiction manuscripts the likelihood of a big advance that'll keep me afloat for half a decade while i get the second and third and fourth manuscripts finished is even dimmer than it's been in the past. the prospect of finding a day job is the worst its been in a dog's age too. fuck it all. and really i just wanna go up to the liquor store on park ave, buy a big honking bottle of jack daniels and stay trashed until january. seems like a plan. just let it all go to shit for a week and a half then regroup with the new year.

i wonder if this life ever starts to look like it makes any sense at all or if it's just gonna continue to be one massive fucking failure after another until the bitter end.