

Phillip Henry Christopher

Fuck

Flen, Flyys and Freris

1

Fuck.

There, I said it.
Though it isn't the first time.
That was in the fifth grade,
but I only said it
to impress
Calvin,
already a menacing
six feet tall,
with sinister
almost-a-mustache,
jet black eyes and
slick Beelzebub grin
spreading defiantly
across reptilian satire face.
I must have said it because my
squat-like-a-dump-truck
Greek boy body,
basset hound eyes, and

tentative smile
pasted awkwardly on
olive-skinned
Charlie Brown
basketball head
was all slapstick
and trepidation beside
the snake-like kid
we called Snake,
must have said it because
my puffy cheeks
were a cartoon
beside his lean,
copper
face.

Fuck was enigma
for Keith,
who lived up the block,
consternation contorting
his bowling ball face,
he blurted out,
“Did you know that
somewhere,
in Africa, I think,
people still fuck
to make babies?”
which wasn’t news to me,
nor would it have been
to Snake,
who was already
using the word
in a more literal way;
one could apply
the past tense to

fuck and Snake,
(what I was
making declarations about
to my serpentine friend
when Mrs. Prynne,
spy station ears whirling,
overheard, swooped down).
Harpy pincer fingers clutching,
she dragged us
into the hallway,
her Ichabod Crane bony body
contorted in the struggle
to grasp his lofty ear lobe
on one side
and my lowly lobe
on the other.
She shrieked, railed,
trembled in insult, then
hurled us back
into the claustrophobia
of tiny desks,
to feign shame
while she lectured
rows of bewildered children,
raged about
knowing too much,
growing up too fast,
until the throbbing beneath
thirty-year teacher
tortured and sagging skin
yielded tears,
choking,
sobs
and silence.

After that,
Snake was my friend,
even when he hit the streets
to deal drugs
and women,
and I hit the streets
to prostitute language.
I learned from Snake
there was power in fuck.

2

Fuck.

I thought it was our word,
thought nobody old
ever said it,
was even allowed
to say it.

Then was that one
torpid July day
we huddled
in the tiny office
to escape skin-melting heat
beside the giant
Ingersoll-Rand
hard steel shaft spinning
three six-foot steel
disk torquing
centrifugal air compressor,
gathered to get details
on the day's labor.

There was Iggy,
with shoulders
broad as the hood of
a '61 Caddy,
who towered over
grizzled gray
old timer
union men in
dark blue pipe
dope-stained uniforms and

faces wrinkled
like desert carcasses,
a mountain beside
foothills,
and Sonny,
the only Italian in town
who could out-golf the
thin-lipped
country club gents,
who gave up
dollars-in-the-pocket
and a '61 'Vette
for a package deal bride,
three half-grown kids,
and the relentless vortex of
one mortgage stacked
onto another.

I stood silent in
long hair, jeans and
make-believe macho,
high on
real work
with real men,
but only a guest,
not paying real dues, like
Union dues.
I slunk in the back,
mind wandering until
I heard the magic word,
fuck.
No, not fuck,
fuckin,
the potent derivative of

the root word,
and looked to see
the boss,
who said dammit and hell,
bullshit sometimes...
the boss, using
the word,
and he was respectable
and old.

“I got my partyin’ shoes on,
an’ my partyin’
bell bottoms
with the patches,
an my mutha fuckin’
partyin’ shirt,
an fuckin’ ‘A’
if there ain’t
no place
ta party
tonight!”

Jimmy Petrie
knew how to
use it best,
knew, or just had
an instinct
for fuck,
the word I mean.
I have no clue
if he knew
the thing,
fucking,
but that
was Don Yorty’s poem,
not mine,
this one’s about
fuck,
the word,
not the deed.
Then again,

are they different?

Does fuck have power

because fucking

has power?

Is fear of power

the reason for

euphemisms, for

making love,

the other slight-of-tongue

disguises for

the impulse to

slam bodies together,

when love rarely

has much to do with it,

the reason it's so easy to

make out

hook up

have sex &

copulate,

mate

procreate or

masturbate,

and so hard to

fuck?

Euphemisms are safe,

delicate,

respectful.

Fuck is fuck.

Fuck steps up and

talks straight,

minces nothing,

mistakes nothing,

regrets nothing,
refrains from nothing,
resists, refutes, restrains
nothing,
no thing is too much
for fuck,
no thing is too bitter,
too sweet,
fuck is heat,
fuck is beat.

Lenny Bruce
dug fuck
and was vilified,
crucified,
sanctified.

I been diggin' fuck
for fifty years,
diggin' it since
the fifth grade,
but never had a thought
about being beatified,
or sanctified,
or even noticed,
just always liked
pedestrian fuck,
because it
feels so nice
to let out a good
FUCK!

Fuck is poetry,
for five hundred years,
since a nameless pub-crawling
smart ass-ed
Middle English scribbling bard with
cynic's eye spied
the Carmelite friars of Cambridge
in pious copulations
with the wives
of Medieval suburbia,
spoke a bawdy rhyme,

“Flen, flyys and freris,
Non sunt in coeli, fuccant vvivysof heli,”

reads,

“Fleas, flies and friars,
They are not in heaven because
they fuck the wives of Ely,”

in Dark Ages
Pig Latin
and English,
disguises to hide
the Word of Power,
fuccant,
fake Latin,
like Middle English
for fugg.

Fuck is crisp, curt,
 blunt like a barbarian club,
 Fuck is Teutonic,
 like ficken, to fuck
 ich ficke, I fuck,
 Fickst du?
 You fuck?
 or often flipped
 inside-out German,
 Fickst du mich?
 Fuck you me?
 is an invitation, like
 something Mozart whispered
 in a buxom soprano's ear.

A thousand years
 before the rutting friars
 a rendering of Germanic fuck
 was bellowed
 by some giant of muscle,
 broad plain Oestergoth face,
 flen infested beard,
 looked upon Roman cities
 dancing flame and fear,
 raised massive middle fingers,
 cried out to
 pretty much fucked
 prostrate Praetorians
ICH FICKE SIE!
 seconds before their
 noble heads tumbled.

What could the Italians do?
Nothing in their softer tongue
came even close to the
power of fuck.

Fuck is hard,
like Siegfried, who sang
Ficke sie!
a thousand times on every
bad day at the opera,
too hard even for
Teutonic titan, Wagner,
who left it out of all seven cycles
when it rung too harsh for his ring.
Ich ficke sie! would have exploded
from Beowulf's tortured wrangling,
from Grendel's blood-soiled tongue
would have come,
Ich bin gefickt!
if only the word had
been invented by then.

Before Beowulf, Siegfried and Grendal,
before Die Walkur,
before the horny friars of Cambridge
was Mohenjodaro and Harrapa,
the Land of Tantra and Veda,
Indra of the thunderbolt,
of the potent fiery weapon,
slayer of Vritra, the dragon,
who held back waters and light.

Indra fiercely threw
the serpent down,
released the waters,
split open the sides
of the mountain,
and the poet drona's eye saw
and spoke the Rig Veda,

He killed the dragon
spread out upon the mountains
showing his virile power
he chose Soma;
from the three bowls he
drank of the extracted soma.
The bounteous god took up the missile,
the Vajra,
he killed the first born
among the dragons.

Indra knew fuck,
was fuck,

wielded his Vajra, and
Vritra was fucked,
loosed his soma, and
waters flowed,
split the mountain, and
there was the flood.
But what if there was
no dragon?
No Vajra?
No mountain?

Maybe progenitive god-man
Indra wielded
only flesh and flowing life,
procreation water soma,
maybe Vritra, who

“...footless and handless
he gave battle to Indra...”

was Indra's
own serpent.
Maybe fuck is Indra,
maybe begins with
the proto-yogi
struggling to subdue
his own snake,
Indra-Onan,
Indra battling a
one-eyed serpent,
battling confusion,
consternation,
conflagration
over fuck,

to fuck or not
to fuck.
Maybe Indra's power
was conjugate fuck,
power to fuck,
will to Fuck,
and Vritra was fucked
either way.

“Let’s fuck,” she said,
and there it was,
The Word.

Six years from fifth grade,
from Snake and Mrs. Prynne,
fifteen months from
first furtive looks,
feeble flirtations and
futile overtures.
Suddenly, lightning sizzles
in clear blue sky, I saw
the power of fuck in the
dilated pupils of
irridium blue eyes.
She said,
“Let’s fuck,” and
I stared dumbly at
The Word
towering over me.
“Don’t look so shocked.
You know you wanted
to fuck me
since ninth grade.”

She was right, of course,
except I wasn’t shocked,
but awed
by the raw force of
The Word,
by fuck used

not as innuendo
but as invitation,
instigation,
awed by a vision of
fuck incarnate,
of tangible fuck,
fuck as roaring beast,
fuck as rolling thunder,
fuck rushing primordial life-giving waters,
fuck crashing tsunami-driven waves,
fuck surf smashing ancient shorelines,
fuck the great Cosmic Egg,
fuck Indra's Vajra,
fuck my own
Sixteen-year-old
virility rising like
a terrible weapon,
fuck omnipotent
fuck immortal
fuck power
fuck sex
fuck creation
fuck mantra
fuck Alpha
fuck Omega
Big Bang Fuck
repeated repeated repeated
creation into creation
like Brahman
turning back into itself
to create again and again,
seed and source,
power of fuck released by
one little contraction,

Let's, Let us,
Let's fuck,
two words ten times
more magnificent than
fuck alone,
and fuck was
forever infused with
the unbridled power
of co-creation.

She said, "Let's fuck."
I stared into
mountain lake blue eyes,
thought of Snake's Beelzebub grin,
Beowulf's strength
and Indra's mighty Vajra,
then split her mounds asunder,
releasing the waters
and the light.