

THOSE GODAWFUL STREETS OF MAN:

A BOOK OF RAW WIRE IN THE CITY

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Those Godawful Streets of Man
by Stephen Bett

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Those Godawful Streets of Man (2nd St.)

And of woman. Everything's fender
slashed, smashed, broken, relationships crack-
ing apart all over the road, love doesn't
last a green light without crisis, kids
filled with amber & entitlement.

Therapists pick up business, open more
shop. And their women/men head thru
windshields seething, air bags, brakes
failed, love blood spray-pooled
on the screen.

Their kids become
therapists.

Those Godawful Streets of Man (3rd St.)

It's the personal, not social,
that catches.

Streets of *insidious intent*, back-
alleys of *Do I dare?*

Sure people are dying by the thousands
hundreds of ways, irksome numbing
stats.

Millions dying inside, too, off-camera,
cross-wired circuitry only just now
taking on generic interchangeable
modular labels.

Those Godawful Streets of Man (4th St.)

The boxes in one's head
eerie de Chirico
expanses
Crossed shadow
rutted, burned thru
pathways

Tight grid link,
wiring frayed

Hurt of love affair
gone bad,
boxes in that
too

Rooms full of heartache
— no vacancy —
right up there
in the brain

Those Godawful Streets of Man (5th St.)

Keep moving,
re-stack the boxes
in your head

Like zeks in the
gulags, they say,
move a pile
one place
to another
& back again

The point being
— there isn't one

Those Godawful Streets of Man (6th St.)

The streets are still out there
full of the usual disasters,
psychic & otherwise
(pending, impending)

Icy, frozen Unlike those
mental boxes, fluid row houses,
neurotransmitters firing instant
distress messages

microscopic in space
unbearably vast
in time

Those Godawful Streets of Man (7th St.)

Each part of a recent
life, interlinked forms
Absorb each other, bleed
into each other

How to get out of
them, any one of them?
How limp, crawl,
squeeze

out of one's own
broken, self-
absorbed
head?

Those Godawful Streets of Man (8th St.)

Crate up the whole thing
throw it down the stairs
throw it into the street

All the boxes in one
mound, all heads
turned, looking,
what's inside

Just a head of pain un-
coiled, shredded wire
sticking up in spikes
across the roadbed

Those Godawful Streets of Man (9th St.)

Back in the street then
the breakage, breakage
what are our lives for
what singularity
breaks head & heart

Too many, too much
it all goes in, goes
out, drips from curb
down the drain

Whose life is this,
whose that, who doesn't
choke when the
love runs down

Those Godawful Streets of Man (10th St.)

Distress message received,
absorbed, there *is* no point
but feeling puts there

What felt such joy
rides out despair
runs down, so
godawful

like the sped-up high
when it comes
crashing down

Those Godawful Streets of Man (11th St.)

Bring it all back
in line, eerie rows
boxes lock to light,
fire shots into vast darkness
shell casings down the stairs
down drains

Bring it all back
catch shadow on
bled form, on grid,
on spiked &
shredded wire

Those Godawful Streets of Man (12th St.)

They're building on the godawful
streets of man, they're building
households of pain

They're building people too,
to fill them

Nerves frayed like over-spliced
wire & inaudible hearts
shorn

They're building handsome houses
with people inside
torn to shreds

Those Godawful Streets of Man (13th St.)

And the heads are god-
awful charred boxes
sitting on top one
another, wires dripp-
ing dangling each
down the next
(splayed
lines)

The streets full of damaged
people, throbbing wires
spitting into each
other (& themselves)
snarls full-on self
loathsome

Staring hopelessly across
fields of traffic as if
life actually cont-
inues on the
other side ...

They're building capital
"d" Developments to
house them with
little cardboard
people painted
in pastels
heads full of pencil
smoke coming
thru eyes

And talk to them-
selves head-jacks
stuck in flabby
ears listen to voices
that don't belong to

anyone but their
“altered state”
selves