

Rum,
Sodomy
& the Wash

Brendan Slater

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Rum, Sodomy & the Wash - Brendan Slater

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*For Jonah, my darling son, who not only towers
above me in stature but also morality.*

*And many thanks to Alan and Karen for their
continued support and encouragement.*

Preamble

Short-verse defies all the rules it makes for itself. It has a contradictory morality. It thrives on new voices and the breaking of the old. Each one-line poem in *Rum, Sodomy & the Wash* can be read in isolation or as part of a longer sequence. That decision is left up to you, the reader. In fact the reader has the most crucial part to play in this collection, to construct the world hinted at in the verses, the reader is the scaffolder, the code breaker, the developer, the poet.

Brendan Slater, November 2012

with a gut full of coins in his pocket

our district judge however eight quid up

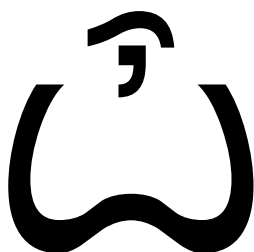
suck it when I'm a classroom assistant

and and those fucking get on your bike

and weeks and months get on your bike

by-pass the welfare plug a crack pipe

state when I'm a job lot of fake valium



in anarchy changing days down and twist it

pierced and you hold our breath longer

in the 21st century get your nose in

tattoo like sevil rehtiH on amitriptyline

tar pawn driven older than my excuses

hocking my darling's stuff nor a spade in the guts

up and down and up even the GP sees it!

and
my
keyworker
and
his
boss
stabilizing
my
mood

with her brusque style but the cunt

with slouched English like a cat that don't need

give a fuck cause your skin's the right shade



walking
stalking
past
golden
showers
and
the
filaments

I wake 100 yards from where I last remember

conscious my whore friend was gone

bag
of
sun
don't
leave
me
dancing
to
the
songs
of
still
water

came once though minutes units



god I want to fuck her hard slow

reciprocally without penetration I can't

the only one version of it I can pronounce

words kill her eyes kill a in ivory lace

that feeling you love to let me teach you

you stop dabbling with let yourself be loved

sparkling them come fuck me eyes

dancing fucking begging me Jesus

let me trust you enough for you to trust me

I am no need to open your legs

three times the undersized knickers

fn

t-shirt changes in the night that tramp

my wife's sister calls a mother a father

I don't need a woman but I do need her

super-sized point (2ml) climate reach

depth only superseded by my ex-mother-in-law

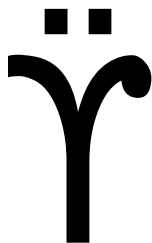
scraped
a
living
doing
back
street
abortions
on
herself

rumour is that he was one of those taxations

the rite of god is sedentary until

12 blues necked with 30ml of cardboard

has to be cardboard else it'd be fake



Obama
and
the
238
angels
left
to
carry
his
luggage

chop
his
mushrooms
before
fasting,
the
angels
of
course

at 6pm every night give or take a few Quaaludes

turn and face the shots of narcissistic supply

with that silver spoon her sister was jammed

duty
at
a
uni
helpline
in
the
washer
before
swallowing

bilious mass and quick escape breasted

ℋ

(back in the 80s) blushing

psychopathic
contempt
she
my
non-practising
barrister

so large not even she could ignore

late night TV skid marked pants down her throat

anthrax embrace and his shitty underpants

she
came
every
Friday
night
tits
bigger
than
my
wife's

the
bloke
who
feeds
you
too
the
seven-legged
spider

Ю

ironically
two
cats
and
my
wife
preaching
to
the
washing
machine

hers, hers, hers and mine and the washing machine's

not to fill my sock's atheist and rob his half

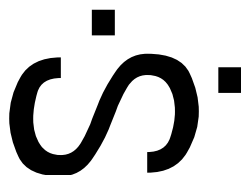
preaching my holy socks to a house full of atheists

we couldn't afford their early morning whines

praying
for
the
dryer
not
to
break
down
again
again
the
swagger

of
the
plumber,
his
wrist band—
the
Rob
Halford
look

she gushing, me gushing, all three of us gushing



left
behind—
two
cats,
the
woman
and
my
over-sized
shoes

his hidden smile stinking of sour milk and death

and
his
name
sagged,
released
into
small
lead
pellets

released
three
days
earlier
from
a
wing
he
didn't
divulge

I
didn't
probe
him
for
his
eighteen
month
stretch
cheekbones

folded into a small foil wrap of brick dust

in the safety of my kennel smelling of old men

yesterday's ash sinking in days to yes

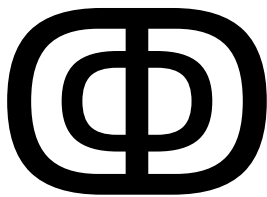
Lambrini on the steps of Tesco at 2am

with
a
whore
he
picked
up
at
two-pairs
of
butcher's
shop
ulcers

city centre joint crusted with cold sores

the moon, two kitchen knives one in each temple

it is this deformed roll-up stained with me that will



smooth is the sun of the poker player

haiku police box me up label me faulty

send me back to the other side of Rhyl

(the side populated exclusively by shellfish)

I'll filter my RDA of words with only the sound

of salt lapping against photonic cliffs to distract me

၂၂

some call it pure O, a gift

unwanted
thoughts
and
images
so
prized
by
charlatans

of psychiatry the holy grail elect some

call it a blizzard of conscience steamed

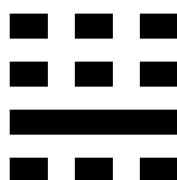
open and left to reproduce in braces of wild orgies

plus plus a carpet notched every time time

creates a unit of time some call it cute, hot, sexy

Muggletonian
piss
markers
on
the
edge
of
that
soft
resort

left to meander out of fashion victims



sodomy
in
halls
built
in
the
image
of
Prince
Albert's
last
terrapin

but for this powdered milk I have everything

for the 1000th time I sing *each man kills*

in his Beemer outside his house his wife



voices almost my own

after refusing the tip I sleep in

we
touch
fingertip
to
fingertip
through
safety
glass
theoretically

alive
but
for
the
dog's
scrotum
dangling
from
my
limbic
system

even on the rough walls of bitter exchanges even

I long to be your foetus

just before sleep that twitching toe just

just wailing a satin night a black cat a just

it
lives
next
door
with
its
collection
of
crocodile
tears

I'm in it it broke that that fucking mirror

meths blind but for the sleigh bells

trusting no one I love my interferometer

flat tongued cocksucker my natural reaction

nonetheless I hang onto my rope

Hb

you stop dabbling with let yourself be loved :
yesterday's ash sinking in days to yes : words kill
her eyes kill a in ivory lace : with that silver spoon
her sister was jammed : with slouched English like a
cat that don't need : with her brusque style but the
cunt : with a whore he picked up at two-pairs of
butcher's shop ulcers : with a gut full of coins in his
pocket : we touch fingertip to fingertip through
safety glass theoretically: we couldn't afford their
early morning whines : walking stalking past golden
showers and the filaments : voices almost my
own :up and down and up even the GP sees it! :
unwanted thoughts and images so prized by
charlatans : turn and face the shots of narcissistic
supply : t-shirt changes in the night that tramp :
trusting no~one I love my interferometer : three
times the undersized knickers : (the side populated
exclusively by shellfish) : the rite of god is
sedentary until : the only one version of it I can
pronounce : the moon, two kitchen knives one in
each temple : the bloke who feeds you too the
seven-legged spider : that feeling you love to let me
teach you : tattoo like sevil reltiH on amitriptyline :
tar pawn driven older than my excuses : super-
sized point (2ml) climate reach : suck it when I'm a
classroom assistant : state when I'm a job lot of
fake valium : sparkling them come fuck me eyes
some call it pure O, a gift : so large not even she
could ignore : sodomy in halls built in the image of
Prince Albert's last terrapin : smooth is the sun of
the poker player : she lives next door with a
collection of crocodile tears : she gushing, me
gushing, all three of us gushing : she came every
Friday night tits bigger than my wife's : send me
back to the other side of Rhyl : scraped a living
doing back street abortions on herself : rumour is
that he was one of those taxations : released three
days earlier from a wing he didn't divulge :

reciprocally without penetration I can't :
psychopathic contempt she my non-practising
barrister : preaching my holy socks to a house full
of atheists : praying for the dryer not to break down
again again the swagger : plus plus a carpet
notched every time time : pierced and you hold our
breath longer : our district judge however eight quid
up : open and left to reproduce in braces of wild
orgies : of the plumber, his wrist band—the Rob
Halford look : of salt lapping against photonic cliffs
to distract me : of psychiatry the holy grail elect
some : Obama and the 238 angels left to carry his
luggage : not to fill my sock's atheist and rob his
half : nonetheless I hang onto my rope : my wife's
sister calls a mother a father : Muggleonian piss
markers on the edge of that soft resort : meths
blind but for the sleigh bells : let me trust you
enough for you to trust me : left to meander out of
fashion victims : left behind—two cats, the woman
and my over-sized shoes : late night TV skid marked
pants down her throat : Lambrini on the steps of
Tesco at 2am : just wailing a satin night a black cat
a just : just before sleep that twitching toe just : I
wake 100 yards from where I last remember : it is
this deformed roll-up stained with me that will :
ironically two cats and my wife preaching to the
washing machine : in the safety of my kennel
smelling of old men : in the 21st century get your
nose in : in his Beemer outside his house his wife :
in anarchy changing days down and twist it : I'm in
it it broke that that fucking mirror : I'll filter my RDA
of words with only the sound : I don't need a woman
but I do need her : I didn't probe him for his
eighteen month stretch cheekbones : I am no need
to open your legs : hocking my darling's stuff nor a
spade in the guts : his hidden smile stinking of sour
milk and death : hers, hers, hers and mine and the
washing machine's : has to be cardboard else it'd

be fake : haiku police box me up label me faulty :
god I want to fuck her hard slow : give a fuck cause
your skin's the right shade : for the 1000th time I
sing each man kills :folded into a small foil wrap of
brick dust : flat tongued cocksucker my natural
reaction : even on the rough walls of bitter
exchanges even : duty at a uni helpline in the
washer before swallowing : depth only superseded
by my ex-mother-in-law : dancing fucking begging
me Jesus : creates a unit of time some call it cute,
hot, sexy : conscious my whore friend was gone :
city centre joint crusted with cold sores : chop his
mushrooms before fasting, the angels of course :
came once though minutes units : call it a blizzard
of conscience steamed : by-pass the welfare plug a
crack pipe : but for this powdered milk I have
everything : bilious mass and quick escape
breasted : bag of sun don't leave me dancing to the
songs of still water : back in the 80s) blushing : at
6pm every night give or take a few Quaaludes :
anthrax embrace and his shitty underpants : and
weeks and months get on your bike : and my
keyworker and his boss stabilizing my mood : and
his name sagged, released into small lead pellets:
and and those fucking get on your bike : alive but
for the dog's scrotum dangling from my limbic
system : after refusing the tip I sleep in : 12 blues
necked with 30ml of cardboard

fin



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Rum, Sodomy & the Wash is a complete work, demonstrating a command of the imagist and minimalist techniques which are as much Pound as Shiki. Verse structure too is accomplished; neither purely free verse, nor quite English-language haiku, Slater makes the monostich in particular look easy. But what marks this piece out is the flexion of the centripetal and the centrifugal. Randomisation becomes recombination; a moment turns into a meme.

Sometimes harsh, but never crude, the verses of *Rum, Sodomy & the Wash* are also stanzas – the fragments of an uncomfortable truth.

—*John Carley, author of the Renku Reckoner*

poetry /
short-verse