

# RAILYARD TALES

A CHAPBOOK BY  
RENN TRANI

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## **South of the Border**

Cockroaches scurry across the floors  
A hired cop cruises along the motel doors,  
Intent on keeping the cockroaches safe.

Across the busy highway.  
Pink vacancy signs buzzing with insects  
as the only guest consist of  
two old gals floating within the pool.  
They're drinking margaritas  
And severely chlorinated water.

An underpaid staff,  
however the job gives benefits  
Trailers behind the motel  
and 50% off.  
The fireworks, snake oil for  
passing families with destructive kids.  
Faces spread against glass  
as they pass the town, looking to  
The giant sombrero tower like seeing a U.F.O

They've been seeing billboards of the alien  
For miles, but it doesn't seem so happy now.  
They drive pass and don't look back.

## **Sheepskin Cabin**

Ma sheep farm a quiet place  
Nottin unusual ever be happen-in within dem gates  
but I still keep ma shotgun always close by. The quiet  
leaves me spar time to rest and pick the gunch  
Out ma teeth after dinner. Fish bones all that  
remain on the plate next to me and ma big gut.

The fire pit purrs and paints ma walls a tabby  
And I slouch back as-uh notha day go by perfect.  
A Sheep opens the front door.  
Normally I wouldn't be too startled, but yuh see,  
this Sheep ain't on four legs.  
Holden they two sheep hands up, and all shy and such.  
Walking in they be praising ma taste, ma cleanliness, and smell.  
Of the cabin.  
I got ma mouth wide open from disbelief, showing that fish gunch.  
Mama woulda smack me for that, for imma southern boy.  
We got a reputation for hospitality, otherwise mama gonna  
turn in her grave. Bless her soul.

So I pull that Sheep a chair, and give em that other fish I was  
boutta eat, Ma gut too big as it is. They sit down and I now see  
They gotta grace to they presence. Them pretty blue eyes. I could  
stare at them suckers all night. The Sheep sure is kind to me  
with they pretty words, I ain't never met a nicer sheep.  
“You’re so sweet I bet you taste of caramel apple and honey”

Yet, looking at them blue eyes makin me awfully tired.  
I start to lose ma gaze but they still staring, and my head start hangin.  
And I knock ma shotgun off my chair's leg by mistake.  
That burning tabby hisses from a creepin cold breeze  
and the room turns darker as the Sheep leans into shadow.  
Once bright and blue, them eyes turn yellow like an old bruise.  
Sheep's mouth stretches and its eyes pop out, the phony blue eyes  
roll towards me across the table. I stumble off my chair.  
Its body shrivels as fangs rip through its skin inside out.  
Emerging out the body, a wolf's head, that now pounces on me.  
Reachin for the knocked over shotgun, I grab and clutch hard as its mid jump.  
The ceiling splats red like expired ketchup  
Its head falls on me. Yet, despite not being attached to its body.  
That damn beast still chompin ma right arm.

## **Green Clatter**

The graveyard's slopes were calling  
An eerie buzz beyond the hills  
As I entered this soulless path  
hums echoed off the curves of grass  
A whisper begging to be heard  
like faint cries of lost children

Depicting an old nightmare, now  
reintroduced. Fears from years long gone.  
Awakened. I must translate this buzz, I said.  
desire for secrets, grew with its loudness  
being reeled closer to this persuading trance.  
An angler fishes prey drawn to sweet light.

They were on me like tv static, the swarm  
cocooned in white noise. I saw bright red eyes  
That sung me to deaf, in excitement to be heard.  
Their tune both beautiful and horrifying,  
an endless anguish of nameless horrors.  
Yet I fail to understand

## **Friday**

I was a rascallion downtown, friday.  
Those stationary banks that reach the sky  
unloaded their money makers round five.  
I zipped, zagged & zoomed on the bicycle  
whistling my saber dance, on the streets with joy.  
Saw all those shiny rolexes round their wrist  
The sight of their watches make me act dumb  
I snatched them off with the pass of my bike.  
(They're wrist were never big enough for them)  
Watches my father made were always tight

they were always on time, unlike our bills.  
The bank men chased him and had himself killed  
These bank men chase me. They now loss a buck  
threw the rolexes in a passing junk truck  
revenge was mine, so happy I could prance  
and I was still whistling that saber dance  
perhaps too loud as I crossed the street, me  
blinded by victory, the bus killed he  
But don't believe this ended all that bad  
for it's all okay now, for I found dad.

### *Author Autobiography*

Renn Trani is a student at VCU, *Virginia Commonwealth University*. Having lived in Richmond his whole life Renn has based his writing off his experiences growing up in the city and his times with friends. He is majoring in Cinema with a minor in Creative Writing. Hopefully we will see more of his work (whatever that may be) in the future.