

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 rapscallion 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.