**The Idiocy (a Tale of Ignatius J Reilly’s Battle with the Imaginary)**

***Kylie Ryan***

In Nouvelle Orleans the denizens tell the tale

Of an obese anomaly, a moustached man-child

of epic proportions, with abnormally enormous ears,

flabby pink tongue, supercilious eyes blue and yellow

and a carnivorous, full, fleshy mouth *(like every chef on every cooking show ever).*

This behemothic blubber boy was oddly attired in a green hunting cap of fur,

not befitting the climate of the subtropical humid lands,

But fitting nevertheless, for he was indeed a hunter –

of ideologies long lost such as theology and geology.

A self-said leader for those who dared not provoke,

the proverbial and literal beast, the ‘Big-Chief’

whose personal goal was to rid the modern world of the woes

it had long endured since the merchants and charlatans of ye olden days,

had enforced ‘The Enlightenment’ on modern menfolk n’all

*(and by asinine extension their women).*

And even black folk too *(although they were too base to know it).*

They incited the wrath of the Goddess of Fortuna

with their ruination of the Medieval system, a faultlessly functioning *(albeit admittedly a bit violent),* social construct (*according to our antihero’s worldview)*,

that maintained order and harmony in the Land of Louisiana,

hence fondly named the ‘Big Easy’ by those Fortuna had favoured that lived there.

The gods of Chaos, Lunacy, and Bad Taste gained ascendancy,

And Fortuna’s Wheel of Fate felled the collective soul of humanity,

from the highest of highs to the lowest of lows,

*(and every cliché this writer can squeeze into the in-between)*

afflicting all souls inextricably linked on the Great Chain of Being

*(disappointing the Great Being perched upon the fleshy balloon head of our Medievalist highfalutin hero precariously perched upon the noggins of God’s long-suffering subjects on said chain),*

filling mankind’s heart with evil of biblical proportions and

abdomen with an ill wind that blew frequently and really did no one any good at all…

As Fortuna’s Wheel crushed the luminous high from which

Happy humans had once largely profiteered,

its revolutions continued to wield a destructive path,

unleashing eras of unnecessary philosophical perversions aplenty

including the ridiculous ‘Reformation’, until finally, it rested with glee

on the overrated ‘Industrial Age’, bringing with it, *(in our anti-hero’s view),*

an apocalyptic outcome – the authoritative New Orleans legal edict

that men of maturity had to WORK for a wage! *(Such an outrage!)*

And so it was thus that Ignatius J Reilly found himself caught

in the murky tides of modernity, tossing in the spurious sea

of societal expectation and his mother’s dreary, daily drivel

inciting him to get a job, that threatened to drown his lust for life.

Ironically, only his bloated belly and ill-operating pyloric valve,

an insupportable affliction in any other context,

kept him afloat in the offshore drift as an unemployable outlier,

For it was these intermittent internal outbursts that prevented Ignatius from holding

down gainful employment for too long, and for this, he was grateful;

for his ill-performing anatomy down under that was ofttimes asunder,

releasing a charge of gastric juices, that sympathised

with their leader’s war with the modern world.

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Alas, for this monumental man of valour poor fortune would befall him.

Bade by his impoverished mother she did command him,

after his extravagant collapse during a Sunday sermon on sloth,

to earn dime amongst the ‘marauding mongoloids’ in employment and thus

The Wheel of Fortune took an almighty downward deployment.

And so for a time he traversed the streets of the swampland cityscape.

Disguised as a pirate or gargantuan hotdog cart man encased,

in a white smock that made him look like a dinosaur egg about to hatch.

Until a new day dawned, a new job chanced and Ignatius was costumed a Knight.

Clad in colossal chainmail hauberk, his green hunting cap and chaffing chausses,

his breast-plates clanged, and war-gear banged by his side flanks.

Our fat fighter for the finer things was ready to serve with

the only prop missing being a brave *(and big enough)* horsie -

a steed to carry the hero in harness to defend the Crescent City.

The hero’s journey took our fleshy, flatulent and furious fighter heaving

on foot on his noble crusade against vice, obliviousness and innovation.

To verbally eviscerate modern day dunces near and far through the

French quarter and cobbled squares to Canal, Condelet and Bourbon Street.

To DH Holmes Department Store, the ‘Night of Joy’ bar, and strip clubs along the beat,

where the cavalier bravely and bombastically shredded the debauched and the weak

*(in the words of our esteemed hero),* ‘Holding court by the singularity and magnetism of [his] being’.

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For days he meandered through streets, corridor and maze,

When one day he chanced upon quite the display,

Science and history edict ‘twas by an asteroid, dinosaurs and their relations were hazed.

But this big bird before him had clearly gotten away.

And so, as Lady Fate would have it, it would be for our Knight, Sir Ignatius J to slay.

Now the wrath of the winged-reptile warrior at his sight,

was expressed in an ear-splitting, eye-watering squawking protest,

Ignatius calculated a wing-span as wide as an F-16 jet fighter.

With every extension its brachiopatagium grew frighteningly tighter.

Grimacing beak and razor talons this beast was undoubtedly a biter

But Ignatius had fought dragons so say folklore of yore,

and was raised a prodigal babe along the Mississippi shore

Having thus far evaded the native alligator’s jaw,

He felt sure this anachronism of nature he could master.

But he figured, *Why challenge fate?* and waddled away

with all the speed that his truncated trunk legs could muster.

Habib's calculations suggest that a pterosaur's wings

could lift a maximum of 500 pounds, that includes fat things,

such as Ignatius J who through ‘misfortuna’ still happened to be,

within far too close a proximity of this pterodactylic monstrosity.

Suddenly the elongated bone-headed monster elevated its claws

and aimed them at the toothsome delicacy Ignatius J,

and in one fowl bird swoop grasped the fat fellow albeit not so firmly,

for the fellow’s fleshy fat rolls waved unnaturally amassing a velocity of the angriest of seas

and with the hurly burly hippopotamic bloating belly ignominy,

an anatomical abomination ignited most terribly,

for the creature’s conflictual kafuffle with the knight of ideological idiocy, had

erupted the monolithic mountain man of intemperance most cataclysmic.

It enervated his endocrine ecosystem most deftly *(however unwittingly),*

so that Sir Ignatius J’s exhaust and muffler malfunctioned most magnificently,

manifesting a discordant aromatic abomination, the pungent perversive aroma of which

was paired with a Jurassic belch that punctured the air,

and threatened to disintegrate his digestive tract and the warring pair, but

a final olfactory offense was omitted when our Knight opened his mouth to shout, ‘You’re defeated!’

Unpleasant airstreams unleashed which, combined with his halitosis,

left the dumb beast reeling in unblinking confoundment.

Legend tells Ignatius’ obese body tossed a molotov cocktail of gaseous eruptions,

emitted from both ends of his colossal corporeal construction,

and so releasing himself from his assailant with his paws

Sir Ignatius punctured his foe with his unsullied sword.

And turned towards the setting sun a saviour,

leaving complete Cretaceous carnage in the wake of his wobbling proportions.

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We must hasten back on the wings of prose Dear Reader,

to the land of the The fleur de lys for it was there

that harps rang out, with songs of the sooty jazz minstrel,

saluting the hero in syncopated and temponic rhythm,

The nectar of Gods flowed and a royal banquet was given,

A symbolic special du jour was the hollow-boned beast,

the prehistoric bird he had slain, and his clansmen did cheer,

for almighty and safe he had made the land again,

for those near, far and dear and from far Kingsmen came to pay tribute

to the brave Knight Ignatius J, the apparent son of a diety

*(we’re not sure which one but ‘tis sure for his sacrilegious piety).*

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Ignatius’ eyes were agleam with the technicolour reflection,

of the epic Samson and Goliath battle that played out *behind* them.

And with this lofty vision of self in his head, Ignatius ignited

impulses at once illicit, involuntary and ancient.

Releasing his sweaty paws from the Jurassic display glass, his eyes

crossed, closed, opened, uncrossed, rolled to the heavens and dilated.

He placed his hand on his horse-sized heart and below,

in the place he was sated by the notion he was a hero

of the land. But behold! A color security guard Jones’ stentorian voice

egregiously interrupted the self-congratulatory and stimulating fantastical thoughts,

of our Warrior, and the gratifying moment heralded by victory song.

Then a firm shoulder grasp and impertinent scolding: “Whoa boy!

You sure don wanna make a bad impressia in a fine place

like the Louisiana State Museum. This ain’ no chariddy.

Get your filthy fat ass away

from them motherfuckin glass or I’ll be moppin this broom

right up your elephantine ass!”