

True Revolutionaries

Dan Bern

Look, Ma,
They're gonna fry Tim McVeigh
She said that nice guy
Who was on the cover of all of those magazines?
Why would they want to do a thing like that?
I said well, he killed all those people in Oklahoma
City
She said nonsense, people don't kill people
Car bombs kill people
And I said well, yeah, Ma
But they gotta do something with him
She said why don't they get Mike Tyson
To bite off both his ears?

And I say true revolutionaries
Never bomb buildings
True revolutionaries
Never bomb buildings
It attracts too much attention
They never bomb buildings

A little girl down my block
Was born with silicone in her breasts
Turned out her grandmother and her mother
Had both had the implants done
And evolution took care of it this time around
And I wondered what it is about
So many women with big breasts
Make them look so sad
And I thought, well, maybe it has to do with the
weight,
The burden they're asked to carry in the world
To feed it, to be the object of its desires
And I wondered what burdens the rest of us are carrying
all the time
And I couldn't help thinking

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And I decided to go out for a walk
And do nothing except
Look everybody I see in the eyes
And not be the first to avert my eyes
No matter what
And I was planning to be gone for ten minutes
But things started happening
And I didn't return for two years
By which time I was the heavyweight champion of the
world
And the expectant father of sixteen children
By thirteen different women

I was in a fishing village in coastal Spain
It was Our Lady of Abortion Sunday afternoon
All the pregnant ladies in their first trimester
Filed before the priest to receive the blessing of
"Try again sometime, try again"
The old barber had dyed his hair green for the occasion
And pierced his nipples
And was riding his skateboard to the statue of Conan
O'Brien
Where he was doing backflips for the little kids
Who threw coins given to them by their parents

A visiting lecturer
Achingly handsome
Had just finished giving a
"How to build bombs in your basement" seminar in the
park
All the young girls put their notebooks away dreamily
And put dandelions in their hair

The chimpanzee who had managed to type out Hamlet three
years before
Was sitting in the third floor office of the driver's
license building
Typing out zoning ordinances
Typing out learner's permits
Bored and lonely

Pee Wee Herman was sitting in the central square in the
grass
Naked and masturbating
While all the townspeople moved to him slowly
And kissed him softly
And sung lullabies in the grass

And in Berkeley
And in Greenwich Village
And in Paris
And in Scottsbluff, Nebraska
No one sits around funky little coffee shops anymore
Talking revolution
They get a Starbucks to go
They go back to their basketball games
Where they see who can jump higher
Who can jam
Who can take it to the rack
And they all wear baseball caps
'Cept they don't say Yankees or Dodgers or Cardinals
anymore
They say Nike; Reebok; Adidas
Because the pro players don't play for teams anymore
They play for shoe companies
And the kids aren't fooled
They're just biding their time
Waiting for the millennium
When all the computers will crash
Because the best scientists in the world
Forgot to make them read zero

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And I was sitting there with a headful of dark thoughts
Like I sometimes get
And suddenly everything cleared
And I realized that the only purpose to revolution
Is to be able to love who you want
How you want
When you want
Where you want
So I took off all my clothes
Stole a boat
Rowed out to the middle of a lake
And I jumped in
And I looked back at you and said
Come on! Get wet!

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