

## Thoughts of the Ass

+ Well those fucking chipmunks ate my pomelo soup, *hombre!*

+ Christmas trees doused in petrol, time to start over.

+ I said, *Hey you think Pablo Neruda ever hitched a ride in one of those covered spacemobiles? TT-783 Supersonic Rickshaw, like I see all the time in Time magazine.*

+ He's a crotchety old bugger, whippersnapper, hooligan, what have you, but that tropical vodka punch knocked me out!

+ Retractable Bottle Brush tree, Japanese Privet, Weeping Fig, so moonlight scatters into thousand nebulous glowing shapes, fragments of cassava fragrance sashay, so much gold-tinted wind.

+ No more, my main donkey. No more ass! Paste your verse to a tin can, stop all this prattling! *Ah my dear sir, you mean colloquy, you mean voice of the anti-laggard, chief petty thief of scarlet rubies. Well, I always return them, because I'm a kind fellow. I have use for rubies, I'd shoot an ox, but then how could I sleep at night?*

+ I said, *Why is the pizza crust so doughy? Where the fuck are my spectacles?*

+ I said, *I really want peace, if not peace repayment for a job well done. Even the president of the United States has doubts, you know, like maybe we shouldn't bomb Kim Jong Un, maybe sending a slew of eighteen year olds from Iowa to run around Afghanistan was flawed anyway!*

+ Growing up I wanted only frozen food and salad for dinner. The taste of salted haddock made me gag. But really: how does anyone eat shrimp, they're like pink ants?

+ I don't want to curse anymore. That was a phase and now it's gone. Ah, the sizzling poem! Just wait till I can't explain this to my lawyer, 'cause I drive with license plates I bought online that don't match, because a gaggle of over-eager officers are always after me and I'm trying to remain calm.

+ *I'll sing about love, I'll sing about peace.*

*Dear Reader, consider the peach blossoms in the grey thunderstorm. Consider how ecstatic life can be, if we just let it.*

## Count Superidiot Speaks

I'm baffled when Grandma Trazinsky chars scrambled eggs,  
and when the prime minister of Turkey or mayor of New York  
says we're all in it together. We idiots get confused.  
What should we pay attention to? I also hate when cats  
jump on the table, or tiptoe across the piano. My name's Caleb,  
but my Aunt Rika calls me Count Superidiot, mostly because

I am capable of major faux pas such as telling passersby  
they could be carrot soup, or would be if my mother  
hadn't taught me common courtesy. I'm a pacifist.  
I hate watching even villains get stabbed, shot, slapped,  
or otherwise harmed. I hate needles and all painkillers  
including Percocet, opium, and aspirin. Count Superidiot

makes no money, and depends entirely on benevolence.  
Sometimes the Count is flummoxed by charlatan razzle-dazzle,  
except that without such performances, the population  
would have no reason to live besides being slaves  
to some inescapable System, which the Count also apparently is,  
although perhaps the trick is to walk super-fast or absurdly slow

in order that the stars can't catch up! All of this that looks illogical  
is just logic brought into some kind of light, yet the Count hopes  
it doesn't matter and his hullabaloo is merely to pass time  
until someone else takes over. The Count didn't even like  
*Star Wars* much as a child; he was too much of a bluestocking  
after his sex change, which made him a woman

in that he had a vagina, but a man in that he had a deep voice  
and was something of a martinet. You see, even the Count's  
poem-origin-myth-moonwalking-tightrope-dance was gutta-percha  
conceived like Grandma Trazinsky in the time of funeral  
mounds in Ukraine. The Count wanted just a plain potato for lunch,  
fried in olive oil, dabbled with a voluptuous cerise mustard-sauce,

with a vanilla-chocolate-strawberry milkshake for dessert,  
and some quiet time to think and read on his tor, located simultaneously  
in the Rockies and at the bottom of Lake Titicaca—Ay, these words  
for the Count provoke such argent sensations: Thank you my friend.  
I'm sure the Superidiot will someday see you around  
in his favorite bagel shop or Katz's deli, or some other paradise!

## Ethnography

The quaintrelle is a peculiar sort who lives in New York with cats, plants, a lawyer she met one afternoon in Koreatown. She collects jewelry, studies for the MCAT, works as a matchmaker. In general she is tall, slim,

has blue eyes, dark lashes, skin the texture of a chocolate egg. She was born in London or Paris, disdains Kentucky, except when drinking mint juleps with a handsome date. Frequently, she wants to slip arsenic in her husband's cocktail,

push him out the window of his lover's highrise. She's read Tolstoy but prefers Rimbaud's *Illuminations*. She never eats cheeseburgers, only escargot, *salade nicoise*, and perhaps, when pressured, sushi or duck soup.

The quaintrelle adores most modern and ancient cultures. She is horrified by the subway. Her chief complaint concerns flirtatious younger women she meets at museums and parties. She enjoys sex but hates anyone who has it.

In college she dated a politician's son. She slept with her best friend's brother on a camping trip to the Adirondacks. Don't ask the quaintrelle about her religious beliefs—she doesn't think about death. She considers herself thoroughly moral and "up to date."

She visits her therapist twice a week, jogs, keeps a silver-starred journal, and reads books about Rwanda and the avant-garde. She no longer drinks coffee, and always purifies her tapwater. She ignores the homeless, but donates

each year to charity. Secretly, she wants to be an actress. If you ever see her outside a city or large suburban area, run, for the quaintrelle has surely experienced a mental breakdown, and is capable of almost anything.