

# AS-IS FICTION

Volume I Issue 1

4th Quarter 1996

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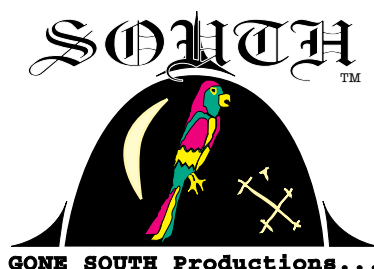
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## *Green Beans and Tuesdays*

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He had to wear sunglasses because of the sun's blinding light. It even made him physically ill as it protruded to the back of his head. Though the glasses had minimal effect he continued to wear them for the entire day and most of the night before realizing that the painful rays of sunshine had quit their fiery glow.

Upon looking into his eyes one could tell that he was possessed with the spirit of some unknown demon that constantly reeked havoc upon his questioning mind. It had taken hold of him one day, though he could not recall when, and since has become increasingly more detrimental to his own shattered sense of sanity. Not only was he becoming more troublesome for himself but also all those in which he came in contact. He lay awake at night and watched as those ever present shifting images of inanimate objects became the moving infestations of his innermost fears.

As the final hours of darkness passed he saw the reddened eyes of the alarm clock blinking into the room which was again filled with the glowing unearthly color of white walls at sunrise. The walls with all their little plaster imperfections told him that those beams of madness would once again penetrate his innermost dimension of sub reality. And so there he lay contemplating the new day that was going to be just like any other and so wasn't new at all, just continuing. He began to search for a reason to rise from the sheets. He knew that he was safe there but could not predict the possibilities if he were to rise. At first he could find no reason to move, but then as he began to dose back off he realized that it was Tuesday. It was Tuesday, of course, how could he forget. He scolded himself for not getting up sooner and jumped from his bed like a man with a purpose. On Tuesdays he had a reason.

He went into the kitchen to make coffee. He was determined to look good today. He wanted his eyes to be open and alive when she came to pick him up. Last week was horrible. He was awakened by her knocking and went to the door in his boxers, exposing every bone that protruded from his body like a skeleton with which someone had simply placed a thin sheet of skin over in order to hold everything together. When he got to the door his eyes were still half shut, and his breath. . . Nonetheless, he opened the door and smiled and let her in, leading her up the stairway that led to his apartment.

This type of unorganization would not happen today. Today he would be ready. He had an hour before her arrival so he drank his coffee slowly, smoking exactly two cigarettes per cup, no more no less. He had three cups. He was feeling better, in fact, better than he had felt for the past six months.

Six months ago he was a writer with no money, no food, no security and like Miller in Paris he was the happiest man alive. His life consisted of submitting poems, novels, short pieces of fiction and plays to anyone who said that they published such things and made their address available. His walls were covered with rejection slips which he figured was an expensive way to wallpaper a room at 29 cents a stamp. But the rejection didn't matter. It was all part of the game. He once told his neighbor the process involved in such work, "I submit, you reject, I submit, you reject, I submit, you send me wallpaper." For this story he received a queer little smile from his neighbor just before he went back in his apartment and bolted the door. He was used to this type of response. All the neighbors thought he was crazy, and now six months later they had evidence to back up their intuitions.

It started with the arrest, it gets a bit foggy after that. He had been drunk one night while watching the television. This was a rare event for him because he felt that television was nothing more than an ingenious form of propaganda. He often spoke with friends about the horrors of being taught ones do's and don'ts from a television. He believed that the programs were just as bad as the commercials because in essence one told you what to buy and the other told you how to live. Neither of which he believed were correct. So with a bit too much wine in him and perhaps too much paranoia he picked up the set, walked to the balcony and

pitched it off onto the pavement below. It made a wonderful sound as it hit the ground and sparked and flashed and nearly caught on fire. He looked at it for a minute then went back inside, lit a cigarette and resumed sucking at the old burgundy bottle. A few minutes passed as he looked over his pathetic little apartment. He wasn't happy, just drunk. Then his eyes began to roam the walls. All he could see was "Try again. . . unfortunately we. . . re-submit. . . we are unable. . . our regrets. . . thank you. . . keep writing." These words now were not just seen on the walls in print, but now he could hear them calling out. He could hear the voices of the people who wrote them as well as the voices of those who ordered them to be sent. They were coming from all directions, in and out of his head. He sat there looking, smoking, drinking and listening until it was too late. His typewriter was placed on a table next to the door of the balcony and with one swift movement he ripped the cord from the wall and threw that old typer down the four flights to the concrete. As he looked over the railing he saw that it had landed right next to what remained of the television set. He stood for a minute then went back inside to resume his thoughts. The voices stopped momentarily but returned quickly. He knew he was not insane because he had thoughts about being insane, thoughts that only a sane person would have, but these thoughts were not at all comforting.

He decided that it would be best for him to go to bed. He put on some quiet music and found his way into the bedroom. The voices persisted. He could not sleep. He tried to drown out the voices with the radio, which he turned up louder, then louder, then full blast. But now it was not the radio, it was the voices that he turned up. The voices were louder and louder, and seemed to be coming out of the speakers even. He went over grabbed the speakers and threw them out of the bedroom window. He didn't bother with opening the window and it crashed all over his bed which lay under it. After the speakers went the stereo unit, and after that the lamp and after that the microwave and folders full of poems and stories, then pots, then pans, then. . .

In a matter of minutes the police were at the door. Paul was in such a frenzied state that he did not hear them knocking. After a few seconds they came barging in only to find Paul completely naked with his box full of C.D.'s in mid thrust going out the window.

The apartment was a wreck. Even worse than it usually was. When Paul finally saw that there were policemen standing in his living room he stopped and gave them a long hard look. What were they doing here, he thought. What was going on? They didn't give him time to answer, but rather they slammed the cuffs over his wrists and told him to put on a pair of pants that one of the officers had retrieved from his bedroom. Paul was taking a trip.

This part of the story is fairly understandable. however, what happened after the initial arrest is questionable. Paul was put under arrest and taken down for three weeks in Mental and then, got out. Those weeks needless to say were not the most fun that Paul had ever had in his life. Mental? Just because a man throws furniture and electronics out of four story buildings doesn't make him mental, it means he thinks. Perhaps he thinks too much, but nonetheless a thinking man indeed. One must point out the scams.

Three weeks in Mental did it's job on Paul. When he was finally released he was a bit mental. Which turns out in some strange way to be beneficial to his writing career since everyone knows that all artists are a bit mental anyway. So now Paul writes when he gets out of bed, if he gets out of bed. Except on Tuesdays. Tuesdays are the best. She picks him up in the mornings and takes him to his appointments. He loves her and tells her every week, to which she replies, "That's nice Paul, but not healthy, because I don't love you, not in that way."

After his appointment with the doctor they go to the grocery store to get supplies for the week. Somewhere he finds the nerve to say it again. Today maybe in frozen foods, but last week it was in the fruits and vegetables. He had run ahead of her to make a large valentine out of green beans right in the middle of her path. She couldn't help but see it. He told her again "I Love You." She smiled, turned as red as the peppers next to her and said "I know you do Paul, but I . . ." her voice trailed off as it for the first time she wondered if she did, or ever could. Paul simply smiled as walked away saying "I know. I always knew you did."

###



## **NEW JUNGLE GENERATION**

©1994 Gary M. Blakely II

MUDDLED AND AIMLESS,  
and organized,  
and getting PAGED,  
Electronically,  
For Dinner Dates,  
For Carpentry Work,  
To Hang Out,  
To Get Stoned,  
To get LAID.  
LOVE LETTERS REMAIN,  
**UNWRITTEN.**

SEXUALLY STIFLED,  
flesh crawling with frustration,  
haunted by the INCURABLES.  
In a world where,  
Lovely Cunts KILL,  
Cocks Carry POISON,  
And latex Savior is still,  
As fragile as Christianity.  
MASTURBATE!  
WITH DEATH FEAR FINGERTIPS.

REPRESSION---EXPLOSION  
Wet Pussies and Stiff Cocks,  
Do Late Night Homework,  
And Methamphetamines,  
To QUELL and RELEASE,  
FANTASTIC ADOLESCENT POTENTIAL,  
UNFULFILLED.

WHEN PHOTOGRAPHED BY SATELLITE,  
All 37 Million Form--  
Patchwork Myriad Nation,  
Ranging From:  
Desolation to Dedication,  
Dreamless to Devoted,  
Passive to Passionate,  
CHAOTIC.

NEW JUNGLE GENERATION,  
Acne on the end of the Millennium,  
Struggling against OLD World,  
PARADIGM of:  
marriage, family, home, hearth, 401k.  
EVENTUAL END,  
Oxycuted, Eliminated, Overshadowed, and Forgotten,  
BY THOSE CURRENTLY LEARNING THEIR ALPHABET.

###

# THE LISTENER

©1994 Demetrius Franks Dumas

Familiarity. White walls - white coats - the smell of a sterile environment - which promotes an element of fear. Cold. There is a coarseness - and an uncaring feel within an asylum - contradictory to its purpose - to treat or to rehabilitate.



These are the added attributes to sickness - sickness, at times being defined by the doctor, or jailer, moreso, - a hospital that just might be privately operated - which is basically funded by those within the process of treatment - who, in fact, are told that they have “issues” to deal with before their release. The irony of madness is as eternal as the cycle of the system.

Familiarity. Reginald was familiar with the process, but did not interact with any doctor, or patient within the facility. In fact, he remained quiet and non-responsive since his arrival. He began to understand the game. He could feel the score within the thin air withheld by those white immense walls. Reginald watched and said nothing - until this day.

Reginald was escorted out of his room and awoke inside a new pearly - white receptacle. His eyes shifted and swayed to the breeze of the icy air from the air conditioner - as he listened. He knew they were to greet him - ask questions - write - leave. The empty social interaction between patient and doctor - ineffective. Reginald sat in one of the three chairs in the room - wearing his old linen suit, and white shirt - his wife used to love him in beige and white. His hair was neatly combed brown, and although he was reaching his sixties, had a full head of hair. But, he had a face which recently had not changed an expression - had not expressed a difference in feeling or mood - for possibly years - disturbed. Wrinkles plagued the face - these did not accent his age, but expressed that something was working on him - from the insides. During conversations at home, he at times stopped - strained to hear something which seemed distant - then, if he felt it necessary, pursued the topic again. And at the moment, he knew they were coming for him.



Two gentlemen in white coats - opened the door - walked slowly to the unoccupied chairs - sat - legs crossed. Reginald concentrated on the clump of their neatly shined brown shoes as they entered - it rocked the soul, as if each sound wave were forcing a crater within him. They opened their folders - and shuffled papers within them. Reginald slightly smiled - the sound reminded him of the flutter of angels wings - also, the fact that neither psyche had even taken a glance at him - he had heard how they usually felt - "tired of the routine".

The young psyche scrambled for words in his mind, while he began to write - he was an intern. The young eager type - wanted to be famous in his field - wanted - money. His neat black hair was perfect - not a hair out of place - and looked well against his jacket - slacks - buttoned shirt - Reginald didn't trust him.

Reginald had seen the elder psyche before - in films - the Freudian type - white hair - balding - beard. This was routine for this character. Reginald looked into his eyes and could hear the voice that fit the get-up.....some type of foreign accent - perfect. Reginald didn't trust him either.

"...um, er, Mr. Du Champ, uh, you have been here for the length of two weeks, and have said nothing. We are just as concerned about your mental stability as your wife - of which is the reason you have been committed here - to this facility. We do, uh, need your cooperation to assist you for treatment", says the educated youth.

"...yez, mizda Du Champ. Pleez talk toozus. It is crucial to your treatment. What, zir, do you feel iz exzactly your problem, or problems?"

Neither looked at Reginald. Their eyes were pressed against the fresh forms they held. Reginald after two weeks grew frustrated, and finally exhausted - and spoke:

"The problem? I have no problem. I consider it a gift. I consider it a gift from God. A gift from the mighty hand of God - reaching into my brain. A problem? What problem? For gifts from God are rare, indeed. I think of it as a blessing, for I am the listener. I am he, for I can hear all things in heaven - and hell. There, I believe, was a story contrived by Poe, which lightly explained this - but, that was created to entertain, and this I assure you is not.

Of course not. This is an acute blessing - passed down from the mighty Creator - for I am the listener - I can hear all things in heaven - and in hell....”

“I can hear the songs, and hymns of angels - playing harps and lyres - with a music that can only be compared to the erratic compositions of wind chimes - for in heaven, of course, there is no time. And a thousand women singing - with voices so soft, they dull a frustrated silence - and birds which imitate those notes - trembling upon the wayside of sound, in perfect sequence - not losing the essence in blinded chirps,” Reginald says blissfully.

Suddenly, Reginald’s face begins to twist in horror. He stops, as if to listen into an unknown source - then proceeds in monotone:

“But, I tell you also, i can hear the noise of hell. I hear the names of the suffering - who call the names of those who live - and call the names of those who do not - and who call the names of those beside them - screaming in horrid lament - so long, that it takes them an hour to reach from the highest pitch, then to fall to the deepest and heaviest low of the belly. I hear them scream in an agony of which comprehension and delirium is all the same - and within this place - they relive all of the vile occurrences of their previous living - the discovery of adulterous husbands and wives - the deaths of loved ones - or the grotesque acknowledgment of raped sisters - there, they relive those emotional torments from the first - with Satan eager to rekindle each sick recollection. And, unfortunately, in this place they suffer most - for in hell - there is time...”

There was a brief silence in him. He calmed himself - breathed deeply - and began again:

“Also, and most importantly, if allowed, I can hear all the sounds of the earth. I could convey to you what you think within the deepest corner of your minds - tell you where you were - and what happens within supposed private bedrooms with significant others - and what sins are so sweet to you - that they cause you to smile - wake - and leave - through open doors - but, do not expect me to speak of those thoughts - or occurrences - for if so, you would betray yourself - like a Judas!...”

“My problems? I have no problems. I can hear all things from the center - to the extension of the earth - to the tap of God’s finger upon his throne - and the secrets of Satan’s tongue - instructions demons how to make you feel infliction the most...”

Then, Reginald seemed confused - puzzled - uncomfortable. He then conveyed concern.

“But, maybe, to think again, i do have a problem. Maybe my problem is more severe than even I can comprehend within my delirium.....it is that I cannot hear myself! I cannot hear myself decipher what are left of my aspirations - to acknowledge personal glories - or even evaluate! I am absent the ability to evaluate! - or what exactly pains my soul - this is not conveyed even to me in emotional clarity! I cannot put together the pieces which would connect, and complete - the puzzling myth of a family. For I am incapable to revive the possibility of their names.”

Reginald ceases for a moment - to seek a response from either psyche - nothing. They write - express not emotion - no compassion - not even a glance of comfort. They continue - as Reginald loses a tear - unknowingly - and resumes:

“I cannot even remember childhood plates and cups - like those I tend to hear tink and clank - within the blissful areas of your minds - or even experience nostalgia - which seems to accent those joyous recollections of infancy. I cannot determine what is truly love within my own brain - for without these I cannot determine an answer - and within this heavy place, caged in bone - quieted by a deafness to these matters - here, comprehension and delirium is all the same - and my problem? My problem is here, within this consciousness, unfortunately, here, as well, there is time!”

Reginald stops. He glances at both psyches. Neither looking - both writing like madmen - crossing legs - pausing - to stare at walls - to collect more expressive words - then, continuing scribbling in their notes. The eldest psyche realizing the patient was completely silent, as they both wrote, merely asked Reginald one last question:

“hmmmmm, uh,.....and zen?”

###



## **HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE CATTLE?**

©1994 David Erickson

I found myself in forgotten New York and tall buildings. I woke up in the gutter with needles sticking out of my arms. I looked across the street into the school yard. I smoked a cigarette and watched the children play in violence. I made way back to my basement apartment with cold concrete walls. I bought a bottle of red wine on my way, and a pack of smokes, and a five dollar alley blow job. Life was good.

I tried college, actually Yale. But, my family said I was an embarrassment and cut me off. That's when I took the Metro North into Grand Central Station for the last time. I now live in Alphabet City. I'm not exactly sure why it's called Alphabet City, but it's close by St. Marx place and heroin dealers. Heroin is nice, but my budget limits me. Drinks are still more important. I'm still not sure if I want to be a junky. It's brilliance is still under investigation. I'm trying to write and fall in love. I'm trying all these thing for the same reason squeaky kids can play. I write my parents letters of how great my life is; "Dear Mom and Dad, today in the city we did heroin." But, I never send them.

I'm sitting in my apartment. It's not much bigger than a jail cell, or college dorm. My only window has bars on it. My desk is under it, and I often stare up at it for inspiration. I share a bathroom with my five neighbors. The cocaine girl in the next apartment is sexy and insane. Her head look like it squirted out of her throat on day. She is tall, skinny, but still has the curves. Her name is Veronica, she came from Cross Point Michigan. She's Armenian.

On my way to the bathroom I bumped into Veronica. “Hey Anthony, guess what?” “What?” “There’s a party in hell and you’re invited!” “Thank you.” “Why don’t you come in for awhile.” I go i and her apartment smells like piss. There is a table, two chairs, and a bed. There is about three grams of cocaine on the table. I sit down. She looked horrible. She looked like hell. Promising everything to hurt me. Pushing me to run. Pushing me to jump in her arms and stay and hope. I wanted to smell her pussy. “Want a line?” “No thank you, but I’ll take a drink.” She grabs a beer from her two foot high fridge. She hands it to me, sits down at the table, and starts in on the cocaine. I notice a fish tank. “Hey, Veronica, I notice you have an empty fish tank, what the hell is in it?” “Oh, why those are black widows.” Her face got excited as she did another line. I wasn’t sure if I wanted to ask, but I did. “What are the black widows for?” “I’m going to set them free in town hall.” “New York has a town hall?” She looked concerned for a moment. “Sure it does silly.”

After a few more beers and listening to her theories on Satan and how carcadian math proves he’s good, she got up and pissed in the bucket next to her chair. “Anthony what do you do?” “Everything, how about you?” “I’m a social revolutionary. I’m going to hurt God.” “Why do you want to hurt God.” “Because Botnic told me to.” “Who’s Botnic, your boyfriend or something?” “No, he’s the demon who lives on the wall.” She showed me Botnic. He looked like a demon alright. But, so wouldn’t any could in the sky. I told her I didn’t care about all that, and it’s about time we fuck. She fucked me real good, and she wouldn’t let me leave until I pissed on her. She then told me she has fifty pounds of black beans and she would cook for me from now on.

Back at the apartment, I received a letter and a \$500 check from some pornographic magazine, for a story I wrote. I cashed the check and woke up in the gutter four days later. Back home, I found someone had shit all over my apartment. I went over to Veronica’s and found five naked teenage boys standing around. I asked her why she shit in my apartment. She said, I was going to have her black beans one way or another. I said, “OK.” and cleaned it up.

I sat charged. I sat charged and didn't have anything to do, or any place to go. I worked the write. Worked it on Coltrain and Mozart. Veronica came over, she had a teenage girl with her. "Can we fuck while you bang away on that thing?" "Sure, do what every you want." "Could you also read what you're typing?" "Yes, yes, just get it on." BANG. "Art is all about thirst. The people you know are dry like desert landscape. They crumble and decay like beaten corpses." BANG. BANG. "I was never impressed by the world. I'm just kicking around underground. And I keep rolling over dead people who don't know it yet." BANG. BANG. "We go insane on liquor, literature, and people fucking in front of us for no reason." BANG. BANG. "My rooms deal with dreams, and genius, and iron reality. You run around with your childhood genitalia and don't know what to do with it. Well, I'm here to tell." BANG. "We have no time for fashion or gene pool. What we got here, is a war on small minds." BANG. "What we got to do here, is fuck each other. What we have to do here is, suffer like lovers." BANG. "We are SONIC and we BOOM. "If you aren't pregnant by now, I'll reach in your vagina and pull out tubes of intestines. Then, I'll hang myself with them. If you are, let me cut the umbilical cord." BANG. "Let me set that mad fucker free."

I woke up the next morning to a plate of beans next to by bed. I ate the beans, took a shit, and went out for a paper, maybe a cafe. I get the paper, "What the fuck, I'll go." I approached the cafe doors like a western gunslinger. I step on in. It was drowning with intellectuals and Long Island college kids. I took a seat on a couch, opened my paper, took the occasional swig off my pint of jagermeister. Then it happened. Some intellectuals tried to immerse me into their conversation/debate. "So, what is it? Determinism or freewill?" I felt sick and had to leave.

I got on a subway, no particular destination. I was sitting across this guy dressed in aluminum foil. No one cared. "Hey, what's up with that aluminum foil?" "It's to deflect the microwaves." "What microwaves?" "The microwaves that are in every house in America." "Oh, I see." A girl got on, she looked about sixteen, she was dressed in a private school uniform. There was no more room and she sat next to me. Her legs were tight, and tanned. They made me thirsty. I pulled out my pint and got to work. "Hey mister, why are you waring all that aluminum foil?" "It's to deflect the poison." "What poison?" "The poison the commies are killing us with." She didn't say anything after that. Looking at her, I wanted to young again. I wanted to be cool, and

drive her crazy. What the hell. “Hey, little girl, what’s your name?” “Janis” “Janis do you drink?” “Yes” “Here have a little of this.” She took the pint and worked it like a pro. “Hey Janis, come get me.” “What?” “You heard, take me on, turn pale, drink, cry, screw, hike your leg and piss on me.” “Are you crazy or something?” “Yes, me and the guy in the aluminum foil are in on it.” She looked at him and back at me. She kept staring at me. I was wondering why she hadn’t moved to another car by now. “What’s your name?” :”Anthony.” I didn’t know what to say after that, I thought about polluting her with heroin, I thought about loving her, I thought about running away. My thoughts were interrupted. My stomach had a sudden shot of pain. I couldn’t control myself, and I shit my pants. No one seemed to care, and I didn’t think about it. “Anthony, did you have an accident?” “Ya, I guess I did.” “Are you OK.?” “I never felt better. Do you ever feel like cattle?” “What/” “Did you know that when cows are brought to slaughter they panic because they can smell the blood.” “No, I didn’t.” “It’s the truth, and sometimes I think I’m the only one who can smell the blood. Like there’s so much we as humans, have become accustomed to, that we can’t tell anymore.” “Are you in a panic right now?” “No, because no matter what. They’ll stick that electric rod up your ass and chop you up.” “Oh” She got off on the next stop, she gave me her phone number. I handed it to the guy in aluminum foil. I got off shortly after and rode back home with shit in my pants.

I arrived back home, cleaned up, and Veronica came over with another plate of beans. I ate them and decided on a park or bar. I sat in a dingy park under a big tree. The night and moon were dynamic. The park seemed to be begging for a murder. I scribbled about it on a piece of paper. I watched a couple of lovers walk together. I was convinced I’d see them die. It never happened. I fell asleep and woke up an hour later. Time for a bar.

I found this small bar with reasonable drink process. It was full of New York city red necks. Blue collared and suffered. I pulled a small table next to wall. I ordered a beer, and a few more. A denim laced cowgirl fell into the bar. She fell all the way in, and everyone wanted to love her, smell her, molest her, she kept falling, she fell all the way into the next table up. I immediately ordered her a drink, so did five other people. She took them all. She never crossed her legs. She sat like she fucked and drank for the same reasons, like she mesmerized cows. I had to have her, I had to have her forever.

Watching her was like the opera. It gushed a tear and crashed inside. Way up deep. I couldn't swim. Not in this moment. This moment I sore, and drown. This moment has me defeated. This moment was forever. I broke down and cried. I cried like a maniac. She came over and sat across from me. "Are you OK.?" Her voice shot gentle gunfire in me. I couldn't speak. I was choked up and couldn't get it together. Then finally I spoke, "I'm crying because of you." "Me, why me?" "Because you're so fucking beautiful. Because I think I love you, and I don't know why." "Why would you cry about that, you should be happy or inspired." "I'll never be able to have you." "I think you could." "You're just saying that because I'm crying." "No, I've been following you all day." "Me? Why the hell would you do something like that?" "Because when I saw you, I felt the same way you are now." "How is that?" "I felt crazy, I felt broken, I felt sorry, I felt forever." She took my hand. She kissed it, and put it to her face. "I don't know what happened today, but I know tomorrow." I knew it too. I know everything. She smiled and let me to slaughter.

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