

Rain Flowers



an ahadada online chapbook by
RICHARD PEABODY

“Sit on the bank of a river and wait: your enemy’s corpse will soon float by.”

- Indian Proverb

For Derrick and the rest of the Gut Punch Press stable of poets and writers

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This chapbook is set in Times New Roman typeface.

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Peace in Mississippi #1

There are white men living
In Mississippi today

And sometimes I think
That's the entire problem.

Rant 2002

(for Woody Strode)

I believe we need a pill that administered in grade school kills anybody who harbors political aspirations. Wipe out those bathroom line monitors and safety patrols early before they can do any more damage.

I believe somebody should plunge an American flag pole through Ann Coulter's festering heart so we can all watch her vampire death twitch complete with blood and gore and crumble into dust finale.

I believe Michael Jackson has done more to harm America's youth than any amount of drugs.

I believe Britney Spears is a femme-bot.

I believe that Sergio Leone is more important than Julia Roberts and her wedding dress movies. The fact that one day people will look back on our times and think of her in the same breath as Katharine Hepburn, Glenda Jackson, and Jane Fonda is beyond my ability to comprehend.

I believe that Ennio Morricone rocks.

I believe the fact that Eminem has won more Grammys than Jimi Hendrix ever did proves how worthless awards really are.

I believe that Ethan Hawke has a book contract only because publishing executives wanted to meet Uma Thurman.

I believe that there is a special place in hell for people who like Beavis and Butthead, Paulie Shore, Adam Sandler or G. Gordon Liddy.

I believe that Tom Clancy is a creepy raving right wing lunatic asshole. How can anybody buy books by a man who said in a *Washington Post* interview that he doesn't respect people who earn less than \$120,000 a year.

I believe that Aimee Mann matters more than Howard Stern.

I believe that Ollie North will probably be a best selling novelist. After all Joseph Goebbels and Benito Mussolini were novelists before him.

I believe that there will never be peace in the Middle East.

I believe that Louise Brooks matters more than Rush Limbaugh.

I believe that 60's acid blows today's acid out of the ballpark.

I believe Aaron McGruder is more relevant than John Ashcroft, the FBI, the CIA, the Atomic police, you name it.

I believe Dubya should be dragged by his balls from chains behind an Olds 88 through the streets of downtown Washington, DC.

I believe baseball in this country is doomed.

I believe Skip Spence, Nick Drake, Arthur Lee, Scott Walker, Syd Barrett, and Richard Thompson were/are all geniuses.

I believe no amount of oil is worth World War III.

I believe Bill Cosby knows more about children than William J. Bennett.

I believe that the war against drugs is one of the most colossal red herrings in American history. Shell game stuff. Distract and conquer. And get rich in the process.

I believe Dick Cheney is a congenital liar.

I believe the big car makers should remake classic old cars the public craves like the '57 Chevy rather than retool and make losers like the Cavalier and Taurus.

I believe GRANTA magazine is full of shit for their "We don't like literature" motto. This is so hilarious coming from what amounts to a house organ that shills for corporate publishers Viking-Penguin.

I believe the very names Dick Armey and Richard Lugar says it all about what's wrong with America.

I believe most slam poets are wannabe actors and not really poets at all.

I believe we should legalize drugs and ban fire arms.

I believe Forrest J. Ackerman is more important than Ronald Reagan.

I believe gang members look silly singing and dancing whether it's in a film like *West Side Story* or in a gangsta rap video. I'm so tough, watch me dance, woo.

I believe the two-party system is damaged beyond repair.

I believe it would be great if somebody set up a howitzer in the woods opposite Rt. 66 from the NRA building and lopped a few rounds through their plate glass windows.

I believe anybody who harms a child is not human.

I believe I will die having never watched a single episode of *Oprah*.

I believe it should be legal for me to kill any driver that rides my bumper and then cuts me off when I'm doing the speed limit in the slow lane with two car seats in the back.

I believe almost all popular music, movies, TV, and books suck. If it's doing well at the box office or on the charts I'm 95% certain it has nothing to say to me or to you or to anybody else.

I believe one day we the people of this great country will get rid of the demons and CEOs who currently operate it.

I believe Leonard Cohen should be nominated for president of the world.

My Wet Nursing Career or Life Without Mammary Glands

I want to let you in on a little secret—
Men and women are not created equal.
My nipples aren't cut out for nursing.
And my daughter realizes this fact.
I am the other big person in her life.
The one without beaucoup milk.

And it's not like I haven't tried
Every bottle in creation, every nipple,
Even pouring milk on my chest
And trying to get her to lick it off.
Okay that's a lie, but I did
consider it a possibility one day,
as she refused the hundredth bottle
and screamed for mommy for hours.

Actually after a recent swim my daughter
Pointed at my chest and said
"Daddy nanas." And then harnessing
all of the flirtatious smiles and powers
that will soon bring teenage stud muffins
magically to my front door—hugged
my arm and got real close and asked
"Daddy nurse? Daddy nurse?"

My wife, still nursing our 2-year-old, by choice
Urges me to go for it in a share the pain
Empathy ploy that's oh so transparent.
But then she's getting regularly chewed and mauled
And her nipples have the battle scars to prove it—
Bloody lesions, scabs, oozing . . . mommy tartare.
More proof if any were needed that
Women are stronger than men will ever be.
I'm not sure any amount of skin on skin smiley smiles
are worth that kind of torment. But then I'm just a guy.

A few nights ago I was lounging on the couch
And my daughter climbed up on top of me
And out of the blue lowered her head and
Bit down hard on my chest. Clean through my shirt.

And my little sabre tooth made a direct hit
On one nana and it hurt so much I had tears
In my eyes as I let out a shocked yelp.

Let me tell you the sparkle in her eyes was scary.
But the one in my wife's eyes was even worse.
She, witnessing the event, still hasn't
Stopped laughing.

"Daddy Nurse?" No—I think my
career as a wet nurse is way over.

I Won't Forget All the Times I Waited Patiently For You

Oh God, I had food poisoning the night before.
I was positively green. The black and white shots
Were the only ones that looked good.

I like this photo. Awful shoot but that smile
Is for Vanessa's toddler. He was building sandcastles
Behind the balding Richard Avedon wannabe.

Sexy? I had cramps and it was six in the morning.
Malibu cold. My goose bumps had goose bumps.

I hated the photographer on this shot.
He was a total pig. Fashion shoot?
More like a fascist shoot.

I'm leaning against the wall cuz my feet
Are killing me. We'd been shooting for three hours.
And look at those ridiculous heels.

They sewed me into this outfit.
Nothing but safety pins holding it together in back.
If I sat down the thing would have been in tatters.

Cheesecake. I can't believe what gets guys hot.
If I put my finger to my lips, or slick my dress
Down with my hands like this, maybe snap a strap or
Adjust a shoe. Men are ridiculous.

My father had just been taken to the hospital.
Pensive. Scared. A pacemaker and he was fine.
But I didn't know that yet and it shows in my eyes.

Right—like anybody ever looks at my eyes.
They should just laminate the calendar
For easy cleaning.

Seriously, you can't see the people holding
The giant beach umbrella in this shot.
My makeup melted. No more desert shoots
For me. The sand gets everywhere.

Another heartbreak.
So why not tease and torment the photographer?

Not a thought in my head in this one
Save for when's dinner?

Camels are the worst. I'll never go anywhere
Near one again.

Angry and distracted. That Nazi bitch
was on the shoot and made all of us kiss her ass.
Legs up to her neck. Worse than a camel.

The little girls in this shoot were a pure joy.
I could just hug and squeeze them all day long.
One of the best shoots because all of the models
Wanted the girls to love them.

Oh *that* photo. The pregnancy test strip turned blue.
I was so happy, so excited, on an almost cellular level.
You can see it in every photo shot that day.

God, why am I telling you all of this. They're just
Photos. It's what I do. It's a job. People dress me, make me up,
Tell me where to stand, and then the photographer plays
With lights gauges and reflectors for a couple hours.

All I do is wait. Did I mention that I'm so sick of waiting?

It's Gonna Take a Lotta Love or God Bless the Conspiracy

Mars needs women.

China needs oil.

Hey maybe they can work out a deal
For all those unwanted Chinese girl babies?

Big Oil doesn't care about women or children
Or caribou, or Inuit, or gators, or swampland.
Big Oil needs love though, and lots of it.

Do you think they have a contingency plan
Up their sleeves for when the fossil fuels are gone?

I mean besides perpetual alerts and Word War III?

Russia needs love.

They have all this untapped oil under the Caspian Sea
And no way to dig it up and no way to distribute it.

Beginning to sound like a James Bond film isn't it?

China needs love.

They have people lining up to get car tags
So they can chase their NASCAR dreams.

And Big Oil needs a lotta love.

Cuz they can drill the oil and pump it through
A new pipeline to the Chinese so they can embrace
All of that lovely cha-ching.

And that's a type of love after all. A love that needs
colossal spin control and a publicity machine.

Only one thing stands in the way of this lovefest—
A Stone Age dinosaur of a country called Afghanistan.

And Afghanistan needs all our love
Like some kind of Asian Neil Young.

Dan Rather was on the BBC the other day
To state that we know less about what our
Government is doing right now than at any
Previous time in our country's history.

That sure makes me feel safe.
Don't you feel safe?

Because corporations need love
And Big Oil needs love, too.

So much love that they're even rewriting old
Sci-fi films—gone are the evil corporations
Waging mock wars in *Roller Ball* or *Robo Cop*.
They prefer it when the public sees other
Countries (or planets) as the bad guys, or the threat.

Return with me now to the 1950s.

Mars needs Women.

Almost makes me want to wave a flag.
See how many people I can blind
With the Stars and Stripes.
Cuz while you're distracted
I'm sure going to be up to something.

“Remember the Maine!”

Mars needs Women so much easier to handle.

Suicide outboards zooming up Puget Sound,
Crop dusters attacking Yankee Stadium.
Life Magazine World War II
Doomsday scenarios.

Don't believe me? Look it up.

Keep them scared in Kalamazoo,
In Wichita, in Grand Junction.

Mars needs Women.

China needs Oil.

We were sold out long ago.
And we all need a place to hide.

Pogo had it right--
“We have met the enemy and he is us.”

Our blindness makes it so.

Mars needs Women and so do I.

John Prine had it right:
“Your Flag Decal Won’t Get You into Heaven Any More.”

“Jesus don’t like killin’
no matter what the reason’s for.”

Buena Vista Social Club

Okay—so Fidel Castro invades America.

Red Dawn II.

What's he going to do with the other 49 states?

I mean what is the total population of Cuba?
 More Cubans live in New York City and Miami don't they?
 How's he going to occupy Texas or Montana?

And what's with this Guantanamo Bay thing?

Can anybody explain that to me?

We're big old missile enemies and yet we have
 An actual functioning naval base on their island?

Who's the bully?
 Who's stealing whose lunch money?

Guantanamo Bay.

That's like discovering your lover
 Has a roommate. Are they or aren't they
 sleeping together?

I mean Fidel Castro? He's our enemy?

He's so scary if Jimmy Carter took him to a
 Habitat for Humanity house raising party
 Poor Castro wouldn't scare a teenager.

The propaganda machine has to really
 crank overtime to make Cuba
 a viable threat these days.

Ten years after Fidel is dead and gone
 Havana will blossom with casinos
 And star-studded hotels all over again.

Shellac dripping from the polished notes
 Of every Afro-Hispanic's daydreams.

The Ten Most Misleading B Horror Movie Titles: A Found Poem

*Beast with a Million
Eyes* (It has two)

*Frankenstein's
Daughter* (It's a man)

She Gods of Shark Reef (No Gods, no
Sharks)

Robot Monster (No
Robots)

Blood of Dracula (No
Dracula)

*Teenagers from
Outer Space* (No one in
Cast under 30 years old)

*The Indestructible
Man* (He's destroyed)

*It Conquered the
World* (It doesn't)

Teenage Zombies
(No teenage zombies)

*Frankenstein Meets
The Space Monster* (Has
Absolutely nothing to do
With Frankenstein)

Flat Head Tales

My yoda's vinyl ceiling has fallen
And flutters with the windows rolled down
Like the silly black sheets filmmakers
Frequently use to masquerade for the sea.

I've tried duct tape, staple gun, and
Driving one-handed while holding the mess
Up. Anything to avoid having flat hair
Which makes me look like a Dick Tracy bad guy.

Flat head. Don't mess with me, man.
One arm on the wheel, one arm holding
Onto my ceiling, which bounces off of
My head like the attack of a B-movie monster.

Woodstock Elevation

I never understood
That mountains
And rivers
Go together.

In the Hudson Valley
I see this and comprehend.

And I realize
I miss mountains.
There really aren't
Very many where I live.

And once again
I long for New Mexico
And mountains
I have never hiked.

Shootout at the Arlington Arts Center

A lone brother shooting hoops.
Deserted playground. Clang.
B-ball off the rim. Another
Clang missed hook shot.
Self-conscious. Race pride.
My little girl clapping cuz she's
So excited to see the slides.
As the big man shooter clangs
an easy layup. Keep walking.
I'm the only witness. Like
Catching your parents in bed.
Clang. Now he's dribbling,
Eyeing me, wishing me gone.
How many shots can anybody
Miss when they're six plus feet tall?
Clang. I stop watching. This is
Just too incredible. A huge man
Who now throws up air ball after air ball.
With nobody defending him except
Maybe the boogeyman. Does Mike
Ever have a day like this? Even little me
Can make a few of these shots. Some
Days the blues must put rocks in your shoes.

Let the Healing Begin

Because we're not partisan.
Imagine the boy king in one of
his very own electric chairs.

Imagine pulling that switch.
How many volts kick out of one of those babies?

2000 volts administered in two charges,
each of a minute's duration, separated by ten seconds.

That ought to 'get after him.'

Because we're not partisan.

And we're going to work together
To heal the country.

The last gasp of the master race.

The last gasp of whitey in your face.

Time to send the Bush boys and their
Gestapo father back to the ranch

Is it me or does Dubya look like
The love child of Bush and Ollie North?

I mean I didn't think it was possible
To look more like Alfred E. Neuman than Ollie.
But Dubya. does.

Imagine pulling the switch.

Witnesses report the smell of burnt clothing and charred flesh.

The arrogance of the grinning executioner.

The hair fries at how many degrees?

138 degrees Fahrenheit. The body is initially too hot to touch.
Inner tissues are baked like well-done beef.

And there's the stench.

The only good Republican is a dead Republican.

I'm sorry. We're not partisan. We'd never be partisan ever.

Let the healing begin.

Pull that switch now. Please somebody pull it now.

Imagine Ronald Reagan statues on every street corner.

Imagine a country so incredibly stupid
that it would elect a man who has
Been arrested three times.

Don't forget Star Wars. Coming to a Pentagon near you.

But we're not partisan.

Dubya dies with his boots on. But get Cheney, too.
And Trent Lott (the other white meat).
Cuz the father's sons of bitches have to be
Running the show. The idiot boy king couldn't be.

Physical reactions include heaving chest, gurgles, foaming mouth,
bloody sweat, burning hair and skin, and release of feces.

The fix was in from the onset.
The fix was in when McCain went down swinging.
Middle class guys never beat money. Never.

The fix was in all along.
'Cuz Dubya's father owns some of the companies
that actually make the voting machines.

But we'd never be partisan. Not in this town
Where who you vote for is more important
than chief justices, or laws, or any mention of the people.

The people who any day now are going to finally stop
acting like sheep and laugh and turn their backs on these hypocritical idiots
and their laws and their ridiculous idea that money gives them
the right, any right, to any thing.

Please pull the switch now.

Like an episode of Tales from the Crypt
Where Dubya wakes up strapped into 'ol Sparky.

The eyeballs pop out of the head, that's why prisoners
Are forced to wear a leather mask

In America where we all wear leather masks,
Where we are all prisoners now.

Not partisan, my ass.

Send Dubya back to Texas
And fry him.

Fry him until he's truly chicken fried
And well done.

Then we'll break out the A1 and show them
just how we grill out in Washington, DC.

Richard Peabody wears many literary hats. He is editor of *Gargoyle Magazine* (founded in 1976), and has published a novella, two books of short stories, five books of poems, and co-edited six anthologies with Lucinda Ebersole--*Mondo Barbie*, *Mondo Elvis*, *Mondo Marilyn*, *Mondo James Dean*, *Coming to Terms: A Literary Response to Abortion*, and *Sex & Chocolate* (forthcoming 2003). He also edited *A Different Beat: Writings by Women of the Beat Generation* for Serpent's Tail in 1997. Peabody teaches fiction writing at the Writer's Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and in the Johns Hopkins Advanced Studies Program. He lives in Arlington, Virginia with his wife Margaret and their daughters Twyla Grace and Laurel Ellen. You can find out more about him at <http://www.atticusbooks.com> or <http://authors.previewport.com>. E-mail him at hedgehog2@erols.com.

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