

Hoss Men (continued)

by Ann Bogle

Oct. 24:

It had been lost on me that shoes from Latin America were not available for sale but cocaine was—this was the 1990s; or had cocaine been replaced by speed manufactured in people's houses? Pictures of chemical explosions were on the news; young people had burned their skin. One young man posed under a portrait of Jesus. One young woman's skin would never repair. Her face and body would always look like that—an unmade bed. It was a drug war after the fact. It was the war of a generation, but who knew which generation or what the sides were? Was it Colombia flaming the U.S. with a forest fire of addiction? Was it Canada deluging the U.S. with prescription drugs without prescription? Had it been the C.I.A. looking the other way (but where?) as Honduran exiles sent millions in proceeds from crack cocaine manufacture in California to the Nicaraguan contras? Was it a war against blacks and poor whites to stoke the military and the burgeoning prison complex? John Kerry had stood up to the Senate, but he stood alone. When I voted for him, it was with adoration. "My Crush on Daniel Ortega."

Let's talk about "academic unemployment" for writers. Free speech was porn. "I'm sure you'll have a very interesting novel about academic unemployment," the agency in Minnesota had written about the story about Frederika, the academic in the novel. "What do you want to be, a rogue journalist?" someone else had asked later when I had applied newspaper editing to writing on the internet. He had published a story in *The Washington Post* when he was nineteen, a white Republican from a political family at school at Howard in D.C. He dropped out of college to do drugs. Now decades later he was bullying people at AA in PA, a secular Republican opposed to the welfare state, to fat on people's bodies, and to bipolar disorder, an insurance salesman whose goal was to

renovate his farm house and work three days a year. I never met him, but that's where I sent the beaver.

My short story collection had been returned nine times. It had had the following titles: *Table-Talk* in 1988; *"Hymen" and other stories*; *Hogging the Lady*; *The Universal Girl for It*, and in 2000, *Institute of Tut*. I finally stopped sending it when FC2 rejected it. *Fax the Beaver* was its last, secret title. The beaver is a dirty trick, and it belongs on the index card. All the 21 stories in the collection have found separate "homes," as people say in publishing (that and "shepherd," as if publishing were a gathering of Jews for Jesus), except one about young writers called "Raisins," one about childhood called "The Hostage," and one about M.K. called "Hymen."

"Hymen" ran through workshop three times. It was another writer's interview piece; it was becoming boilerplate for a textbook. Later it was edited until it was a story about anti-Semitism instead of a story about rednecks in upstate NY, egalitarian rednecks who were vigilantes for choice. That reader's fear was of the hinterlands. One could hardly blame her that she had not read much in "the paper" about redneck vigilantes for choice nor met one; in fact, she didn't read the paper, the paper once wrote.

Oct. 25:

Litmus

Last night a group of poets who thought my name was Alison or Susie invited me to eat with them at a Ukrainian restaurant. It was my duty as their guest to remember one fact and "divulge" it regarding my publishing assets. The obvious, though it slipped my attention, is a poem I had recited at a gallery in the Bronx that is to be translated to Ukrainian. I had momentarily

forgotten it. The woman with a farmer girl's blond braids whom I knew by her name and A.S.'s endorsement let me know at table—there were six of us—that I have an internet “presence” that extends beyond explicable borders considering I don't “have” a book. I “have” a chapbook, I told her stupidly, joyously. Later I compared our internet presences at Google—hers is vast compared to mine and pertains to two books that I could readily locate. She is a visual artist who is also a poet and disagrees with the academic study of poetry. I ought to have praised her for her letter and poem; instead I had praised her past revealed in her letter. I feel like telling her now about the town of La Crosse and the Tom Waits song about heaven. I feel like praising Truck for not showing; I had gotten lost and not shown for a reading in St. Paul and compared it to Arthur Craven's disappearance. I rarely meet someone in NY who is not a Christian-Buddhist-atheist. The poetry hidden in the underground poetry market sounds gray through a cave of filtered light. The “difference” between internet and “print” is transition.

Oct. 25 (cont'd):

My chapbook in the underground market is a “book” at 30 pp. with color art. She had asked, how are you “there” (on the internet), not are you late, nor why are you here, nor what are you (as the square-faced lady had said on Halloween in '90). 56, the traveler. 22, grace. Fiction, I said, not meaning it.

Oct. 25 (cont'd):

rose
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Submission guidelines:

1984-2008

[paragraph]

Sunday, Oct. 26:

rose helmet fink bed light one

Guidelines (1984-2008):

“old school” wait single submissions solicited unsolicited rejection slip form rejection slip written rejection acceptance word count deadline S.A.S.E. postage envelope street address postman post office contract assistant editor guest-editor genre editor editor publisher Gordon Lish *The Quarterly* agent William Maxwell literary journal George Plimpton *Paris Review* magazine *nom de plume* *The New Yorker* Daniel Menaker *New York Times Book Review* Radcliffe Publishing Institute M.F.K. Fisher's “war cake” Virginia Woolf H.D. Christa Wolf Margaret Atwood Grace Paley Adelaide Morris *Nineteen New American Poets of the Golden Gate* Lorrie Moore J.S. Marcus Knopf small house large house vanity press mss. double-spaced 12-pt. nlqr nlqs Times New Roman floppy disk word-processor Word Perfect cut-and-paste pencil imagination pagination margins draft revision proofs I.B.M. Selectric typewriter *Writer's Market* advance royalties subsidiary rights first North American rights copyright Lillian Hellman Mina Loy e.e. cummings Theodore Dreiser Gertrude Stein Theodore Roethke Emily Dickinson Sylvia Plath William Carlos Williams Elsa Baronin von Freytag Loringhoven Jane Bowles Gregory Corso Kenneth Rexroth Ivan Turgenev James Joyce D.H. Lawrence *The World Split Open* J.D. Salinger Beats Dada Alexander Cockburn T.S. Eliot Bloomsbury Group Anaïs Nin William Burroughs Stephen King *Grey Gardens International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses* mIEKAL aND Xerox independent

press Pushcart Prize micropress L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Bruce
Andrews Lyn Hejinian Leslie Scalapino Ron Silliman creative writing
program Iowa Cornell Stanford Sarah Lawrence Johns Hopkins U-
Mass. Buffalo S.U.N.Y. U. of H. Ph.D. M.F.A. B.A. M.A. M.L.A. A.W.P.
J.I.L. Ch.H.Ed. canon theory abstract concrete ethnopoetics Jerome
Rothenberg Pierre Joris Larry Woiwode *MSS*. Robert Bly Allen
Ginsberg Robert Creeley Amiri Baraka Naropa Binghamton
Community Poets Eudora Welty Anton Chekhov William Shakespeare
Sherwood Anderson multiple submissions multi-submissions
Timothy Liu Amy Hempel Lydia Davis Linda Gregg contest fee
contest judge grant application writing retreat writing seminar
writer's colony conference convention typography minimalism
maximalism pomo experimental conventional collaboration text font
illustration cover design author photo writer poet poem long poem
series poem epic poem letters hard cover paperback soft cover
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story memoir autobiography letters creative nonfiction literary
genre "stuff" Jim Robison Rosellen Brown contacts family partners
lovers friends newspaper paper weight black pen blue pen red pen
PEN read submissions reading period fall semester spring semester
winter quarter summer quarter trimester international translation
Nobel Pulitzer Guggenheim Mac Arthur N.E.A. fellowship grant St.
Mark's Poetry Project Anne Waldman Woodland Pattern Laurie
Anderson *Diverse Works Fiction International* Harold Jaffe
Washington Review Mark Wallace *Black Ice* Ron Sukenick The Loft
spoken word slam Richard Howard Alice Quinn C. Michael Curtis
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Jean Valentine Adam Fieled poetics prosetics vispo Sheila E. Murphy
Charles Bernstein Amy King Lee Ann Brown Sean Killian litmus test
barter at-cost favors fashion model commercial model community
model

(600 words)

Oct. 27

One light bed fink helmet rose

one
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Oct. 29

1991 Mixed-genre multi-genre intergenre intragenre hybrid genre
attention span reader multimedia audio video CD perfect-bound
saddle-stitched folio alternative book fair *ABR Rain Taxi* innovative
style form friction process product

Oct. 30

Garrison

New Year's Eve-to-New Year's Day, 1991

“In Israel, a garrison unit (Hebrew: *cheil matzav*) is a regular unit defending a specified zone such as a city, a province, a castle or fortress, or even a single building.”

T.C., her mother and I were drinking champagne by the bottle. We had drunk a case of it. We were in for the night, not driving. Outside it was cold, many degrees below zero; with the windchill it was 45 below. The doorbell rang. The dogs barked. T.C.'s mother, G.C., let them in. One of the men was T.C.'s first sex partner in high school. It could take a day to remember his name, and I might confuse him with someone else in high school, create a false attribution. I could place a call to get his name, but I am no longer on friendly terms with T.C. I don't recall his name, but it was he, the same jock from high school who had broken her. She was not a jock. The nameless jock was tailgated by P.S., a different P.S. than one previously mentioned in this story, not to confuse them. P.S. had been my secret admirer in junior high. He had sent me a box of chocolates on Valentine's Day in 8th or 9th grade. The nameless jock was in high spirits because he was in the Air Force, about to be deployed to fly a mission over Iraq. He and T.C. hightailed it upstairs, and I stayed downstairs saying “no” to P.S. We must have been pretty drunk. We must have sat there for two hours. I didn't want to drive in that weather at that hour. P.S. wouldn't take “no” for an answer, so I left. I drove three miles before the car stopped groaning in the cold. I thought of the word “garrison.” I thought it was on her part like sleeping with the enemy. It was unclear who the enemy was. The enemy was not our military. Knowing her, she thought it was sex in defense of Israel. I thought in her horniness she had not had a choice; I thought in my

lack of horniness I had had a choice. It was the first I had heard of a mission over Iraq.

Oct. 31

Halloween

My first thought of the war, then, was of "Israel," but I abandoned the thought when the war opened in favor of "gasoline." I had months before that written a short story, "Texas Was Better"—in September 1990 before the war—that begins with a gasoline shortage for boaters. I wrote the story within days of my arrival to Texas from New York in the vein of "what I did on my summer vacation," but I had, in fact, moved to Texas and was writing as a recent journalist in the vein of a reporter touching foot in a place and writing about it. The "news" in the story is of gasoline prices going up; the rest is a fiction, a poetical investigation of private life, especially of "daydreams."

- 30 —

November 17

Postscript

Camille Claudel

L.H. would not remember this because she was not in school w/ us, but I had taken one look at B.P. and said, "no thank you" when the other graduate students urged me to believe that he would or could make or break our careers. A. says I like alcoholics best; here was one I didn't seem to like. He was an ad man from NY, and, as it turned out, not a very talented poet. I have a stubborn streak. Perhaps B.P. made it for E.W. but broke it for the rest of us. Who among us is tenured? E.W. B.P. is E.W.'s literary executor. Is T.M. tenured? Did T.M. go through B.P.? A. and R.H. say T.M. is a

sociopath. Is T.M. “missing”? T.M. got A. her “job.” Is M.M. still “missing”? Why did D.M. and M.M. and A.B. avoid drugs or not encounter them until 1993—into their 30s? What was going on in 1993? That’s when I met G. and saw A. there in her cocktail dress. G. was on coke in high school. A. reminds us that T.M.’s mother was schizophrenic. Am I still missing something? Was I “missing”? I was at home not writing. The therapist said repeatedly to write for therapy only, but it was counter to training, so I sat. Later I wrote about that. Six days at the psych. hospital in Houston, so I missed a few conversations. Do the women who published books remember B.P.? L.A.M. may be tenured. B.P. was after her time. Is my forgetting B.P. why I said the other day that I have a life, not a career—I have a life, not a cigarette and coffee sobriety?

T. called B.P. the other day and put us on the phone together. We talked about squirrels. I told him that I was making a chapbook for someone in a chapbook collective, and he said that sounded “creative.” Does it? I’m just dropping someone else’s work at the printer and paying for it. I’m not to the point of asking B.P. to read my poems.

A. said only one of the poems in my present chapbook, my second, the poem called “Borgo Was 29 on His Birthday” is glad to be female. A. likes that poem because it has the word “consumerism” in it, my suspicion, not because it is glad to be female. The female speaker remembers for him because he forgets—is remembering female? and forgetting male? I thought the rememberer in “Head” enjoys watching him from his ceiling—the man in the poem, who is stoned, yet atoned, in his 10th step, exactly where he started. A.’s husband likes my vanity poem, the one I wrote in 1983 but did not submit or buy until many years later, when I ordered in hardcover for my mother. My first published poem. I remember when I presented it to my mother, I said, “This is not prestigious.” That vanity press had gotten more flack than usual because with W.D. Snodgrass at the helm, and larger cash prizes than most prestigious

grants, people might make the mistake of thinking it was prestigious. She laughed because she liked it, anyway. *Touch of Tomorrow* is the name of the volume.

Gals. Girls. Ladies. T. can't pronounce the plural and says "woman" for "women." L., my former "hick" friend whom A. met, says "gals." So L. sings but doesn't write. She sings a drastically deep and sonorous form of the blues and tells everyone to kiss her white ass. She's 5'2" and 105 pounds—which is not fat, by the way. She dropped out of college at 79 pounds. She remembers witnessing the rape of her poodle when she was young by a much larger dog, a mutt. Then Coco had one baby. L.'s nose is African as my green eyes. She gets Brazilians. She doesn't like the Jewish people due to the day the school canceled Christmas. She can't forget it. She cried over it when she told the story to her Jewish woman friend, a bartender, who couldn't get enough of her. Many alcoholics in L.'s clan. Her dad was in the bar equipment and the bar business. He died at 32 of a heart attack, but some of the kids said he'd been shot at the airport. She is Catholic/Lutheran but nothing really, which is why it jolted her not to worship Christmas at school. It jolted me less, and I loved the dredel song. We went to Congregational church and had church music there, and my father was in the choir—these two men years later, Mr. Soules, who'd had a brain tumor that had left a stitch near his mouth, and my father, Jack Bogle (not of Vanguard but of Gillette), whose prostate cancer had left him bereft but not without strength for the distance. He died in 1992, six months after my trip to the psych. ward and the same year B.P. got to Houston. His hair had been gorgeous and shiny and jet black. And his father was of Scottish parents and brown.

When Sonia fantasized about mental hospitals, it was the gothic type that she'd seen in *Camille Claudel*. When A. dreams of it, it is what? The woman the AA group stoned to a pulp was Jewish—why I left. She'd been to Bellevue in high school for downers she'd bought on 14th St. after early rapes. My family went to all lengths to

protect her from her violent husband. She ended up “relapsing” on drugs she'd never used before 19 years of AA, heroin for one. T. brags about heroin. He enacts shooting up. Does anyone go to NA? Is NA just plain out of sight? I agreed to go once with a schizophrenic woman pot smoker from AA. Everyone was 17 years old. One man was 40. I said very nervously in that crowd something I wouldn't say today except at an AA meeting—*I was an alcoholic.*

