

Stumptown Mary

by George LaCas

so one time the Holy Ghost come down to Stumptown

she look around and she like: "Where is my advance party? My security?"

but all round it's cold, wet, the skies grey as old meat

and she go: "What the fuck am I supposed to do? I hate my job!"

but the angels they gone now and she be here

all by her fancy candy-ass lonesome.

and she walk round Oldtown and a few of the homeless can see her.

and she walk in the Pearl, invisible, tall and holierthanthou,

holierthanme is for fuckin sure

the soup man on his bike rides by, sniffs the air

like he can smell something besides brown barley

and organic bullion and celery

he don't know what that smell is: that shit's pussy from on High, motherfucker.

anyway, Holy Ghost traipses her fancy heavenly ass from one end of Stumptown to another, from the main post office down to PSU, and the whole time she got this look on her face, like, what the fuck.

I guess someone prayed for her, or for God or Jesus or Allah or Jehovah or Yahweh et fuckin cetera, and she be on the clock so it be her turn to float down and take a look around and come back with the usual bullshit: "I didn't see nothin, all is well."

the thing is, though, this time the Holy Ghost fucks up cause she looks down, and lookin back up at her is a young homeless girl (her hair all stringy and filthy, motherfucker, her clothes all brown with shit and black with street, her eyes two coal holes, her mouth near-

stitched shut, her nose twitching at the slightest smell cause this young chick she like a cat, an animal) ...

... and this girl's lookin which mean she can see Holy Ghost, which ain't like normal, cause only the dyin or living dead or those falling toward hell or social climbin toward Heaven can see the Presence, who this time she be lookin like Playboy-hot or some shit.

and which stop the Holy Ghost in her holy slippertracks: "Wait a moment, my child, do you mean you can see me?" she hisses, lookin around up and down the street like a damn tweaker, a brain-roasted crackhead, but the dirty homeless girl she be lookin up at the shining Lady steady, her face ready, her eyes not believing the lie of Heaven though it be standin tall before her, not buyin that shit for one motherfuckin second.

and the poor girl nods, and points to her seam of a mouth, her bitter slit, meaning: "Yeah I can see you, but I can't talk."

why the sky pick that moment, that crumb of time, to spit down cold rain, we won't never fuckin know, but this is PTown, rain ain't no miracle up here.

but rain it does, and the Holy Ghost she be standin there like a prom queen with pig blood rainin down on her good time, her white fluffy dress and veil and candy halo all be runnin and sticky with cold rain, and the girl she smiles

(for the first time in years, for the first time ever since three men threw her in the back of a black van and took her into the woods for a wild weekend full of heroin and moviemaking, Douglas fir trees leaning over to check on her but the roof was in the way)

and the girl she be smilin up at Holy Ghost, smilin that God should come down to answer her prayer yet turn out to be such a

candy-ass, made of white silk and fine blond hair and a rock-candy halo and long legs and solid-diamond slippers and a face like like like

like what? cause what the fuck can you say God is "like" anyway? the bitch she be hot and she know it, but not now, no longer, not no more, cause now the sky is gettin dark and the rain be comin down hard and thunder make the ground jump from stampedes, and still the young homeless girl is smilin, but

then she drop the smile off her dirty face cause ain't nothin funny.

and she stand up and this girl she don't come up to Holy Ghost's holy bosom cause she only like 12, a street runt, a mute that Time done forgot, and fuck! if God Herself don't take a step back, drippin with cold rain and her fancy white dress all fucked up and her priceless diamond slippers startin to crumble, yeah, yeah motherfucker, this filthy forgotten mute girl backed off the Holy Goddamn Ghost Herself.

and she hold up one dirt-marked finger

and the sky it go like dark as fuck now and there that evil elephant rumbling

and finally Holy Ghost she cry out, her heartstrings plucked too hard now, more like Hüsker Dü than heavenly choirs, and she go:

"My child, my poor child, please tell me why you have brought me here?" holding her long white fingers out, white claws now, "Tell me what I can do!"

poor girl be lookin up at Holy Ghost now like the tall blonde's a holy fool, and a smirk goes cross her dirty face, as she leans down to

stir her finger in a pile of rainwet shit in the gutter, shit a dog left there, or a cat, or the girl shat it there her own blessed self

and stands back up, finger peanutbuttery, dank and stinkin, and with the thumb of her other hand jerks it at her chest: "This is me." and with her tongueless mouth she mouths: "Me. ME."

and then with shit on her finger she paints a word on God's fancy white dress.

MARY

and Mary she step back from Holy Ghost then, and God

(a princess out of water, a fancy dame who stepped into the wrong part of town)

she begins to melt in the cold rain, not like a pillar of salt so much as a pile of candy-ass powdered sugar, no, not "like" that at all

it was that. God was sugar, God melted in the motherfuckin street and there wasn't nobody round but Mary to see it

which was just fine with Mary, cause she cleans off her finger in the clear running gutter-rain and she squat down and she scoop big handfuls of Holy Ghost, sniffs them like an animal, and eats them and eats them and eats them and eats God up.

until the candy-ass Ghost be gone, gone away, gone forever, which be the way of the world cause if you can't do your fuckin job, lady, you gotta go.

poor Mary she fade off into the shadows, she walk away on catpaws, she silent, you don't see her go or hear her go and pretty soon it be just like

she

don't

exist

and that's what went down the time Holy Ghost
come down to Stumptown.

