

Anonymous Gamblers

by Robert Crisman

1. They Don't Know When To Fold 'Em

Gambling junkies are lit on losing their ass and almost can't *wait* to unload their money, and then reel on home and bounce off the walls or whatever. For these guys, losing's the jackpot, and deep in the hole for them is just like the womb.

Which is to say, they didn't want to be born in the first place. Mom pops you out and hard times begin and nothing is free, not even thin air. Yet sooner or later you have to stand up and be counted, by something or somebody else. It's like you got shanghaied into an *army*--and these guys, the gamblers, went AWOL a long time ago.

2. King Of the Gypsies

These gambling junkies go through the motions of living, and truth is just something that happens to some other guy.

There's the money they blow, and the wives and the jobs and the houses they lose, and their kids who all hate them, and later the dumpsters to ransack for groceries, and hell yeah, it hurts like a bastard--but for these guys down to the very last man, it beats letting mirrors tell them what's there on their plates.

They'd love to believe that they're King Of the Gypsies. And they dream their opium dreams to forget that when it's all over and done, they'll stagger home shirtless in cold, rainy winter at four in the morning, when even the winos have clocked out for home, and wonder just how it is they got waylaid and raped once again.

They'd be King Of the Gypsies alright, if King Of the Gypsies was Wile E. Coyote.

And so life goes on like a fall down a mountain.

3. Hung Like Big Brown!

One kind of gambler picks only on Big Dogs with six-inch-long teeth so that they, the gamblers, can learn for the five-millionth time what Big And Bad means. There's also the fact they can tell folks they've gone in the trenches with rotwiellers, man, which means of course that they're hung like Big Brown.

Another type are guys who'll come up to a pool hall and hunt up the guy who seems like he's Larry the Stooge, and proceed to hand him their ass. They hope that nobody's paying attention of course, but, not to worry; who'd ever believe it was *this* guy who bent them and bled them and left them out in the rain, like something they'd scraped off their shoe!

It was a fluke, or bad luck, or something they ate, or maybe a CIA plot!

These guys have their *reps* to protect, first and foremost of course, from themselves...

4. A Dream Caused By Gas

As I said, some gamblers pick tigers to chew them to pieces. Others pick guys that look like they're toothless and still find a way to end up as dinner.

They then tell themselves it was Martians or something.

Barney Fife kicked my ass? No fucking way!

A speedball or two and a good fifth of booze, and a month down the road the whole goddamn thing will seem like a dream caused by gas.

