

On Writing about Velveeta

by Sean Lovelace

—It cannot be done.

—You are fishing in a coffee cup. (Your fishing pole is a record player.)

—Velveeta does not need a writer to be understood. Any human—unless willfully ignorant or just stubborn for stubbornness, like a mule or a ball of unraveled cotton twine in a kitchen junk drawer (its looping patterns often resembling the meanderings of a housefly stimulated by a drop of sugar water)—can perfectly understand Velveeta. But what about the *value* of Velveeta? To grasp what is unique and irreplaceable in what it contributes? To articulate the previously unknown attributes of existence Velveeta has discovered? Well, possibly we need a writer...like Sean Lovelace. Possibly, the writings of Sean Lovelace, however haphazard his thinking process, however riddled (shall we say addled?) his mind, if still supported by true passion (who here can say it is not?) can, or possibly will, maintain its usefulness, as words may provoke and engender additional thinking and thereby assist in constituting a *meditation*, an intellectual foundation, a series of critical echoes, a background essential to the greater understanding of Velveeta, and in doing so—

[At this point I left my Writing Chamber. I walked to the library to continue my research. A square, green, sputtering machine roared to a halt. A woman opened the door. Within her eyes, a circus.

“The fuck you doing?” she yelled.

“Huh?”

“You walked right across the grass! Walk on the sidewalks, not the grass.”

“I’m sorry,” I said.

“Sorry doesn’t grow grass!” She slammed shut the door on the green cube and bellowed away.

The day was miserably hot. Sweat pooled along my waistline. I felt just a little bit shorter, as if *de-cruited*, or *de-growing*. I wanted to say to the circus woman; I wanted to say, "Human nature is not my fault, you know. If I was the architect of this town, or any town, I would have built everything first but the sidewalks and let the people walk—let them express their human sensibilities of awareness and direction and tendency—and once a few months had passed, once their natural meanderings/cuts and joyful lollygags/struts and stretches and ways of life had worn gentle paths in the grass, I would have *then* paved over the paths, to create walkways where the people already wanted to walk. Now why can't life be that way?"

But I didn't say any of that. Having lost my momentum, I faced about and returned to my Writing Chamber.]

—It's a mechanical contraption. Why must you remind us all the time?

—Writing transforms Velveeta into historical fact. To create a Velveeta around Velveeta. Blur. Shape, fashion, form, mold.

—The great thing about yellow is that it isn't black and isn't white.

—Some of us want to know *less* about *more*, OK?

—Have I mentioned the usefulness of the box?

[-What do you want me to say? I'll say it.

-I don't want you to say anything.

-Right. That's the truth right there. I feel it acutely.]

—Plasticity of emotion.

—Relentless mechanical contraption.

—Oh why.

