

Howard
and
Friends

A Poem About My Poetry

by Howard Hao, Vol. 14, Iss. 2

My poetry isn't always rhyming
Why bother? Poetry need not to.

It may be short,

Or it may tend to blather on and on about absolutely nothing
Of incredible interest in particular whatsoever.

It's not like the teenage angst,

Fuck—everything—in—the—goddamn—world—
Cos—I—feel—like—shit—and—hate—my—life

Crap. No way!

It's not like the extreme and bizzaro,

Mocha—jive—hippity—hoppity—
Joo—joo—eyeball—bongo—thumping

Bullshit that no one can ever decipher. Heck no!

It's not chock full of

Literary references or connotations or
Profound metaphorical discussions

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Bullshit that no one can ever decipher. Heck no!

It's not chock full of

Literary references or connotations or
Profound metaphorical discussions

That take a lifetime to master. Never!

My poetry is about reflections,

About thoughts,

About takes on matters,

About perception,

About humorous material,

About anything I feel like writing about.

And that's the beauty of it. So take that to the grave!

It may be concise,

Yet also be so labyrinthine and intricate that it takes one a few

Reflective moments in solitude to fully treasure the underlying

Definitions, the ironies, the hypocrisy, and hidden symbolism.

There are no facts here...only opinions

In a form

That may easily be spread

Across the masses. Look for only pure literary entertainment.

untitled

by lowkey, Vol. 15, Iss. 6

I admit

it's a habit of mine

to grab rhymes out of thin air

my tag lines say i've been there

sniffed Ritalin singed my nose hairs

random flows go nowhere

but that's exactly my point

as I enact my tax of the joint when it's passed

and I still have much life to live and many mikes

with which to give my insights on kids

plus the actions they did

skip to the end of the novel to learn how the plot unfolds

kids doing the exact opposite of what they're told

stuck in react mode

Fiction for Free

Piggy Piggy

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 1

The little boy was ecstatic.

“It talks! It can talk! I am certain of it!” he exclaimed and pranced around his bedroom in glee, waving his arms about in triumph. The fat little pot-bellied pig was a birthday present from his parents.

“Say something!” beckoned the boy to the pig.

The pig said nothing. The air reeked of silence.

“Come on! I know you can bloody talk!”

Of course, the parents, very much concerned for the boy’s well-being, heard his screams and taunts and immediately took to investigation.

“What is it, Cedric?” they inquired.

“The pig! It can talk! Talk, pig!”

The pig said nothing.

“Cedric, stop this nonsense and go to bed.”

But, of course, little Cedric was absolutely convinced that the pig could talk.

“I know it can! Talk!”

“Cedric! Stop yelling at the poor thing,” pleaded his mum.

“Sorry, mum...”

After a spell—and a lot of coaxing—Cedric reluctantly went off to bed. Early the next morning, little Cedric with the pig in hand, went off to classes. In the courtyard, Cedric awaited impatiently for his good friend Henry. After a few more moments of impatient waiting, a chubby boy, stuffing his portly face with crisps, waddled over.

“Henry, where have you been?”

“I passed Mrs. Knightley’s along the way and went to get some crisps. Care to share?”

“Perhaps later. I have here a talking pig!” Cedric was aglow with pride.

The two boys stared at the poor porcine creature with wide, unmoving eyes, making it most uncomfortable.

“Talk!” commanded Cedric.

Of course, the pig said nothing.

“Maybe if you gave it a crisp...”

“Wise idea,” agreed Cedric.

They fed the greedy little pig a crisp. Eagerly, the two boys resumed their fixed stare at the pig.

“Come pig! We’ve fed you a crisp. Now, talk!”

The pig said nothing.

The bell rang and all the other children in the courtyard began to fall into position for morning inspection. The headmaster strutted out shortly. He spotted the two truants and a small pig in the far corner and sauntered over to them.

“I say! Salutations, gentlemen! Why are you two not queued up?” he implored.

“We’re trying to get my pig to talk,” explained Cedric.

“Young sir, do you not know that such an act is absurd?”

“Beg many pardons, sir, but my pig really does talk! Say something to nice the Headmaster.”

The pig said nothing.

“Young sir, are you quite certain of your incredulous statement?”

“It is a fact, sir! Talk!”

The pig said nothing.

By now, all of the other children have left their posts, curious to observe the miraculous talking pig. The headmaster was flustered.

“Now see here, good gentlemen! Imagination is a wondrous gift, but there must be times when it should be restrained from reality. Now cease your silliness and move along!”

“But sir,” pleaded Cedric, “I’m sure it does, just like that stuttering cartoon pig on the telly! Talk, pig, talk!”

The pig said nothing.

“Talk!” instructed the headmaster to the pig.

The pig said nothing.

“Talk!” chided the children.

The pig said nothing.

“Talk!” quipped Henry.

And the pig said nothing.

“Young sir, enough is enough. I am contacting your ma and da right this very moment!”

The headmaster stormed off to his office. By now, the children, Henry included, have all scattered off to classes, bored already with the antics of a “talking” pig. Cedric, alone with his pig, turned to face it.

“You have disappointed me greatly today, pig,” warned Cedric. “Next time, please consider talking when instructed to do so.”

The pig blinked a few times, and looked up at Cedric.

“I want another crisp.”

Wine Tasting

by Howard Hao, Vol. 12, Iss. 6

Inexperience shows profoundly
As the Master experiences hints
Of mint, berries, chocolate even
Whereas I note only fermented
Grapes and the pungent odor
Of fermentation and wood. One
Thing we both agree on...
It's a great red wine.

Melody

by Dalas V. Vol. 15, Iss. 6

It was March when the birds came back, and their song reminded me of the way you used to sing.

Now, as I look at your larynx in that pickle jar, I realize that no,

I could not capture something as beautiful as that.

I'll never hear you sing again.

I'm so silly.

The Food Rhyme

(Gustatory Galore)

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 2

Cheesecake, escargot, kumquats
Red hots and hamburgs and halibut
Gyros and antipasto and shish-kebobs
Caviar, shark fin soup, roasted squab
Sirloin strips with a side of mashed
Other potato dishes: baked or hashed
Ginger on crisp fried flounder
Nuclear chili, New England clam chowder
Venison, rusks, quail, and fruit
Mocha in ice cream, biscotti
Vichyssoise, gumbo, and couscous
Flan, tempura, and hummus
Biscuits and crisps for the Brits
But for the Yanks, cookies and chips
A Buffalo sub, Chicago beef
New York City pizza, Philly cheese
Lobster, scallops, and fried clams
Deviled eggs, grits, grilled yams
Chicken fried steak and doughnuts
Croissants, lager, ale, and cold cuts
Wines: Merlot, Zinfandel, Chardonnay
Sauvignon blanc, a nice red Cabernet
Kimchee, pickles, basil, salt
Strawberry, vanilla, chocolate, malt
Artichoke hearts and cooked tofu
Collard greens and chicken stew
Calamari, terrapin, a big smoked ham
Cheese omelette, shrimp bisque, marzipan
Bird's nest soup and thick pork chops
Real bleu cheese, souvlaki, soda pop
Port wine, brie, gouda, swiss
Kale, celery: nice and crisp
Agave, uglifruit, and peaches
UHT milk, open-faced sandwiches
Jamaican beef patty, roasted chestnuts
Cherry danish, brownies with walnuts
Jams, jellies, preserves, watercress
Darjeeling, Irish and English breakfast
Cafe au lait, oolong, key lime
Minestrone with a hint of thyme
Baguettes, beignets, bagels, and more
So many dishes; gustatory galore!

Friends

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss. 6

They get you outta trouble
And loan you money.
Take care of 'em.

Partner in Crime

– for Lloyd Samplawski

by Howard Hao, Vol. 12, Iss. 1

He just up and Gone ta Texas.
Then ta Philly. What am I gonna
Do without that tubby bitch?

The Woman

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss. 8

Sensitive, sweet,
Voluptuous, and proud of it.
The soulmate of Man.

Security

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss 10

That cozy little twinge
That you feel...
Analogous to the ol' blanky.

untitled

by lowkey, Vol. 15, Iss. 6

why rhyme about homicides
when your life's been a bona fide easy ride
parents making bacon
they provide for your suburbanite stride
they're giving, you're taking
talking slang
emulating gangs, inner city things
straight faking
not exactly from the city but I know these kiddies
listen to Biggie
try to get jiggy
want to lose their virginity
but flip when they get a hickey
want to be what they can't be it tickles me
their lack of diversity

Happiness

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss. 4

A sudden urge to freedom;
You desire to clench your fists,
Leap all about in the spotlight,
And scream out for all the world to hear:
"THIS IS A MOST ENTHRALLING
AND PREPOSTEROUS FEELING..
HOW I LOVE IT SO!"
Like mulligan stew;
A hodgepodge of emotions.
What a euphoric rush!
A sudden jolt
Of infinite amperes
Scurrying up vertebrae,
Intercostal muscle,
And into the most minute extremities
Heightening awareness
Of all things Good around you.
Such is a high that
One wishes never to cease.

Rollercoaster Ride of Momentary Love and Fortunes

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 6

A busty brunette strollin' down the street
So beautiful and can make my life complete
Geez, Louise, stop it please—
I can't take anymore of this torture!
Eye candy and bliss, not to be missed
Is mine to forsake and to treasure.

A Love Poem for the Nineties

–for guys of the 90's everywhere

by Howard Hao, Vol. 14, Iss. 1

Staring at me with eyes of pure pouty pleasure
Oh, how I treasure your perfectly packaged ass
An adoring admiring public meticulously lingers
On your big bubbly bouncing breasts...
GODDAMN IT, I WANNA FUCK YOU

Trees: A Perspective

by Howard Hao, Vol. 14, Iss. 2

Beautiful trees
 The trees stand their own
 The mightiest tree stands tall
 See how it stands and bares its
 strength even against the harsh elements The
 great tree stands tall unscathed by the
 atrocities that lay waste to other surrounding
 victims But the tree prevails Of
 course The thick cork cambium sloughs
 off with each passing hour But the tree
 prevails Strong and bold audacious
 in its own right even
 under perilous
 circumstances
 Still
 the
 tree
 stands
 Still
 the
 tree
 stands

Life

by Dalas V., Vol. 15, Iss. 6

I never saw myself ending up in a place like this.
 The warm embrace of pine trees all around me, the comforting
 whisper of the babbling brook, the words "I am Goat Jesus" etched into
 my arm with a broken bottle.
 Sometimes life really throws you a curveball.

Currency

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 3

The answer to all prayers
 And almost all problems.
 Cash IS the universal language!

NYC Subway

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 3

As you step out into the platform
 There is the immediate assault
 Of stale urine on your unprotected
 Nostrils. Rumble, rumble goes
 The mighty train, whisking away
 The next load of business-people
 Staring intently at the Times.
 Ah, the panhandling, the litter,
 The occasional rat. The
 Opposite wall across the tracks
 States the rule of a local
 Young punk while torn
 Announcements of Doctor
 Zizmore's miracle skin
 Restoration flaps violently
 In the backdraft current
 That blows echoing through
 The dimly lit tunnel walls.
 God, I miss the City!

Impetus

by Dalas V., Vol. 15, Iss. 6

I didn't love you for your beauty. I didn't love you for your money or your strong character.
I didn't think of you as a stepping stone to greater things.
I didn't love you because you loved me.
I didn't love you at all, in fact. That's probably why
I killed you.

Effigy of an Evil Flatmate

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 3

This one's for
That thorn in my side
For oh so very long...
Fuck you, bitch!
Kicked out of school for being an idiot
And succumbing again for a second round,
Now an assistant for the rest of her pathetic life.
Nasty and dirty
And picks through garbage.
Slams doors, leaves stains,
Always on the damned telephone—
Hair all over the damned place!
Never buys new stuff, just gets
Worn out, old shit—used shit
From the dump, like that package of oversized
Underwear you brought home and paraded around.
Not that frugality is bad, but to the
Extent that she prevails...
Doesn't leave messages after calls;
Guess what you harridan! Revenge is sweet!
Take that you wicked wench,
Penny-pinching scoundrel
With the fucked up family
That won't shut the hell up even at
Two in the fucking morning!
Booming, maniacal laughter and
haughty
Voices echoing in the middle
Of the night. The closet door
Slamming, waking me at three fucking AM!
Well, eat shit and die, bitch!
My sincerest best wishes to the other,
The kind and gentle flatmate.
My sincerest "FUCK YOU" to the harlot;
If our paths should ever cross again
It would be a doomed fate!

untitled

by lowkey, Vol. 15, Iss. 6

dogs yelling keep it hardcore keep it ruff
I add enough fluff to deduct all the mean stuff
show it's all love
everyday I try to rise above all the bull
but everyday I feel its same pull
hoes in clothes that's tight
if you don't have gold kids think your flows ain't right
I would love to see kids who hold mikes break the molds
and stereotypes
but for real do whatever you feel 'cause it's your life
I'm not trying to tell you how to live it
I'm just letting you know about the visions I've been giving
as I roam the area code I like to call home
2-0-2 digits

Interruptions

by Dalas V., Vol. 15, Iss. 6

When we're alone it's so perfect.
We look deep into each other's eyes and feel that "special something."
But it seems like something is always trying to interrupt,
breaking down the barriers we've built against the world,
and arresting one of us for the murder of the other.

Disdain

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss 10

Glaring "if looks could kill"
Look that propels daggers
At one's antagonist.

Gave It My Best

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 1

I gave it my best; all I could manage
Well, I've got news for you:
It ain't enough, kid! Do it again!

Our Love

by Dalas V., Vol. 15, Iss. 6

We were adrift, two petals floating in a pond, circling each other, twisting, turning, dancing on the current.
At least that's how the police report described us when they found our dead bodies in Lake Simmons.

Ejection

by Howard Hao, Vol. 16, Iss. 1

You absolutely do NOT understand me...
How it feels to be ejected
Like a soiled tissue paper
Buffeted and bounced on a pendulum swinging
From a pivot on the dark side of the Moon!
No possible way to empathize!
Leave it be; time heals all wounds.
Unfortunately, the rejuvenation
Is not instantaneous.

Disappointment

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 4

Unanticipation followed by
Stymied thoughts. But a few
Subtle clues were proposed
At a different plane of view.
Not taken seriously, these
Nasty notions can come back
And cause forlorn more than
Even words can describe.

Swearing at the World

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 3

Fuuuuuck!
Did ya hear me?
I said FUCK!
FUUUUUCK!
Hatred of this boring shitty life
My soul ceases to urge my body
To move on,
to continue endlessly,
to continue into an unknown
bitter, black void of unheard
SCREAMS and untender lights,
sights, frights, and plights
FUCK!
Did ya hear me, damn it?
FUCK!
FUUUUUCK!
This entire WORLD is FUCKED UP beyond belief!
AND I'M NOT JUST SAYING THAT!
i'm FUCKING YELLING it...

Missed Opportunity

by Howard Hao, Vol. 11, Iss. 8

Opportunity knocks but once
And sometimes, is missed.
Shit!

Power of Procrastination

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 4

The tawny hue of procrastination
Or avoidance behavior, if you are a behavior psychologist
Leaves a lasting stain, a ring of deceit
On your clothes. The rich aroma, like
Cigarettes, cannot be easily washed out with regular detergent
One needs to use the industrial strength stuff
To get this crud out. Yes, the mark
Stays long and hard, lasting through hardships
And mostly prevailing, but it can be fought with the
Proper agents.

Rainbow Brite

–for Amie

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 3

Resplendence.
And here she comes, smiling for
The world, for everyone, cheering
Them up no matter where she traverses.
A grin from ear to ear, aglow,
A brilliance for all those to see.
Bright and shining and never glum.
For when such a possibility exists
Then it is truly the end of the world.
Radiance.

That Despicable Milkman

by Howard Hao, Vol. 14, Iss. 1

Mommy, the Milkman is at the door again!
Please explain to me why I need to hate him.
He doesn't seem all that bad.
He doesn't seem to be any sort of cad.
You said once that he did a bad thing...
Doesn't the word Forgiveness have any meaning?
I am certain he isn't too deplorable;
Give him a chance, he may be adorable!
So let him be and you will plainly see,
That...hey! Why the hell does he LOOK LIKE ME?

Guilty Pleasures

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 3

Take that you fucking morons!
Yeah, watch them splatter and laugh maniacally in glee
Such a guilty pleasure.
It's only a video game,
Distortion and human-created electronic distraction.
God, I love you to death!
Yeah, caressing the blossoming bosoms with great interest
Such a guilty pleasure.
It's only a magazine picture,
Attraction and perfectly-photographed scant human beauty.
I love to gorge on this stuff!
Yeah, pile it on my plate and watch me go
Such a guilty pleasure.
It's only a prepared dish,
Gluttony and a human-created ensemble of spices and taste.
The guilty pleasures of man and woman are many
But the antidotes are far and few between

Spring

by Dalas V., Vol. 5, Iss. 5

It was Spring and the rain was falling.
So were you the last time I saw you.
Falling from a building.

The Pottyhouse

by Ben Zindle, Vol. 16, Iss. 8

Nothing's so rough as the smell of a pot
 In the shadowy depths of a john-on-the-spot.
 She'd lain on the grass to watch the stars twinkle
 When she realized she needed to tinkle.
 She snuck through the forest, silent as a mouse
 'Til her dark eyes of chestnut fell on the outhouse.
 She set herself up and exhausted her store,
 Then she felt she had something a little bit more.
 The pressure was building, her booty was quaking.
 Nauseous, she teetered, her body near breaking.
 Abruptly a silence swept over the room,
 Then withered and fell to the great sonic boom.
 Thank God she'd been seated, else she might have died,
 She groaned through the pain, all the while she cried.
 Then the action was over, an end to the issue,
 When she saw to her horror there was no bathroom tissue.
 She rose from the toilet, and ever so slow,
 Her dignity afloat in the water below.
 She sure couldn't leave but she just couldn't stay.
 The choking stench drove her thought process away.
 She pushed on the door but she found it was stuck.
 She bitterly grimaced and shouted. . . .a profanity.
 She couldn't escape by available means,
 She berated herself for eating baked beans.
 She fell to her knees and she cried as she sank,
 "I just dumped a lump and God help me, it STANK!"
 Tears welled in her eyes, nothing else she could do,
 But stand there and stare at the fatal poo-poo.
 She stared out the window, resigned to her fate
 Then she sat down upon the cold porcelain to wait.
 The hours were long, her consciousness dwindling,
 Had she lit a match, the outhouse would be kindling.
 The hours dragged on, her hands holding her head,
 But by the time her friends found her she was already dead.

Feline

by Howard Hao, Vol. 12, Iss. 4

A swift, silent hunter. Sleek and accurate,
 But a shadow, making no sounds as she
 Pounces. Deadly. Yet curls up next to you
 the following moment—the queen of her own
 kingdom, with You her loyal servant.

Them Signs

by Howard Hao, Vol. 12, Iss. 6

“Sensible Salting Require
 Sensible Driving”
 States nocturnally lustrous
 Bloodless and lime alloy
 Road signs posted at specific
 Strategic locations.
 What a laugh; what salt?

Inflatable Godzilla

by Howard Hao (Vol. 12, Iss. 7)

New Godzilla again filled
 With 21% oxygen,
 Stands proud once more.

The Protagonist

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 5

Everyone always fucking cheers for the protagonist
 Even though it may be a frail, dying breed.
 And why not? for isn't it them who fight
 All wrongs and darkness and soiled ascots
 Of the universe?
 Either way, the mighty and the mighty brave
 Stand their ground against the vile and
 Wretched hives of scum and villainy amongst other
 Technicalities, allusions, and sancrosanctity.
 Standing intrepidly, facing
 A corrupting catharsis, boastingly austere
 In faith and determination, which is probably
 Why so many frail curmudgeons anticipate their
 Presence and punishment. But in all reality,
 Such true defenders and assertive forces
 Are far and few between—hypocrites, barbarians,
 And other such curs and fraudulent fools are
 Abundant, begging for attention
 And, of course, the almighty dollar.
 Still, good is out there, slaking the desires
 And quenching the fires, the prerogative to
 Aid the insomniacs, the inane, those who have
 Erred, or the irksome factions to a
 Receptive subconsciousness. Ticks and tacks,
 Improvising plans and planning improvisations
 Against familiars, the uneducated, and the like.
 Crux, enlightenment, brilliance, impossibility,
 Baubles, nefarious and negligence...why, it's all
 In a day's work I do so believe. One
 Can never tell who the likely candidate may
 Be: the jittery, wiry fellow smoking the fags;
 The endomorph with the crimson face;
 Or perhaps the undaunted voluptuous female
 With the celebrated chiasm.
 Who will be the romanticized figurehead
 Flying about to save lives in utter glory?
 So many choices that seem valid, yet uncertain.
 One may never tell until a demanding vortex
 Comes about and requires the services of the
 Aforementioned.

The Antagonist

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 5

a rusty vile taste remains on your tastebuds
 once the decomposition occurs.
 the bright day turns immediately into stygian bliss:
 a foreboding dark glare that never ceases to lift,
 blanketing all opportunities and optimism,
 like a thick wash of detritus, it
 creates an ill effect on one's emotional,
 psychological, physical, and chemical attributes.
 "when the going gets tough, the tough gets going,"
 they say.
 what the bloody fuck is that supposed to mean any-
 way?
 snide visionaries with their pitiful excuses
 and bland, refried, turbid affairs,
 short-lived and salacious, unlike those of others
 with actual meaning and definition to back them.
 of course it all lies within the
 abhorrence and absolute foolishness—
 no...incredible and utter stupidity—
 of the opposing party, the enemy,
 the fucking deceptive traitor and insignificant
 speck of crude, fraudulent soot in an
 otherwise uncaring, unempathetic world.
 like a flatmate that steals sustenance
 upon non-attendance,
 once attempted generosity and enchantment returns
 a confounding, unforsaken
 faux appreciation and acclaim...an
 effect comparable to vermilion and loden
 explosions and color streaking, flashing trailing a
 sharp blow to a temporal bone.
 dripping corroding fluids,
 all thoughts are distracted by a
 disgusting discord, an irksome and
 irritable err in the metaphysical world,
 an impossible and daft bedlam continuing to survive
 and rape valuable resources from its
 hosts; a metronome meticulously ebbing away
 at precious faith with a resilience unlike any
 other; a cunningly nefarious parasite that pouts,
 smothers, and is notoriously prevailing

Favored Definition of Competition

by Howard Hao, Vol. 15, Iss. 7

Leaving traces of tears and claw marks from day one,
Things are done to our minds that cannot be easily undone.
To crush all the competitors is what is instilled
Into our feeble minds, feeding the growing will.
Unfortunately, there is no such thing as easy persuasion.
There is also no such thing as an easy imitation.
After all, imitation is the highest form of flattery.
But how is this possible in all this cacophony?
Torrent fires burn with hatred and a fiery passion.
Stomp the others out of existence with distractions.
For it is he who makes the most that survives the game.
Exactly who are we trying to fool? This is inane;
Take out all the players and you're the sole survivor
No more competitors in a world dependent on vim and vigor.

Hell's Kitchen

by Howard Hao, Vol. 13, Iss. 4

Submit!
Submit, all you writers,
Poets, bards of the world!
We need your support!
Submit!

Yet Another Goodbye

by Howard Hao, Vol. 16, Iss. 1

For the best of times,
And for the worst of times,
For all those times we've been together,
And for those we've been apart.
It's difficult to let go
And go our separate ways.
Rest assured that I will never forget
Those good 'ol days...