

FOUR FRAGS

OUR LEADING POET

He was number one of ten thousand and had been tormented by unspeakable lusts all his life. His cock was like a black hole in his trousers. All of his thoughts got sucked down into it.

Given the chance he'd have been a fulltime fucker, leaping from body to grasping body, composing verses on the hop.

If the world had been logical from his point of view, he would have had at least fifty different champion lovers to satisfy himself with.

However, no one would consent to touch him, or let him touch them, no matter how he harried or plied. He was too ugly, and bachelorhood stinks.

Incapable of rising early enough to find paid work, he didn't even have the money for the cheapest sex-workers in the city, the ones that did their business lying on the mud and broken glass underneath bridges, like troll's doormats.

Lust is thirsty. If it cannot drink sweat and spittle, stout and whiskey will have to do. Our leading poet spent the few shillings he cadged from foreign students or begged from priests on drink, which was the only thing he needed more than sex, being a partial cure for it.

When he got really drunk he could sometimes pass out without having to masturbate first.

Eventually his frustration became so severe that fancying people was no longer enough for him. He started finding things attractive as well. He felt the immanent sexual longing of dumb objects pulsating all around him. Things shot sub-atomic rays of sex at him from every direction. As soon as he saw something, he wanted to roger it.

Twigs, hospitals, barges, north-facing slopes- he was tuning into the vibrating sexual frequencies of all of them.

He was the world's first objectophile, a neologism he feared latinising, as that might make it an official sin. Our leading poet believed unquestioningly in the Authority of God and the Classics, and of their earthly representatives.

He still had to take a running jump into the nearest canal to cool himself off if he came anywhere near of a banjo.

Not only the thing itself, but the damned tweaking of it too!

Our leading poet plucked up the courage to speak to his friend, the cardinal, about his objectophilia. The cardinal had heard strange cases like it before, from other lonely and dependent artists. The cardinal was a patron and a confidante of artists. He was sympathetic to their diseases, and sought ways to

religiously cure them. For example by getting them a clerking position in Dublin Castle, or a ticket to Australia.

But this was the most serious case he had ever encountered. Our leading poet's whole being was throbbing with lust. He kept stealing horny glances at the Cardinal's extremely alluring silver clock.

The cardinal made our our leading poet kneel down before him and raise his sin seeking face to the Lord. He sprinkled our leading poet with incense and incantations, ululating a direct appeal to Holy God on his behalf.

Holy God was merciful. He granted our leading poet the release, overwhelming, of everlasting impotence.

THE METHODS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

I was at high tea with a certain northern plumber, and a certain northern plumber's life coach and lover, who also does a little bit of plumbing. We were discussing our rivals in the local plumbing trade. How we could crush them. Various proposals were put forward by the life coach, who had convened the high tea, and was always eager to act as our mouthpiece.

By the time the eight-cup pot had run dry we had come round to settling on proposal number 4.

Since I am our plumbing circle's archivist, I minuted our decision in an invisible ink of our own design. On our very own invisible paper.

Recently, we have had approaches of interest in our archive from the British Plumber's Library in Harlsden centre for contemporary plumbing.

I was glad it was proposal number 4 that had won out. The other proposals were run of the mill, the usual combinations of letter-writing campaigns, anonymous e-mails and web-postings, free-for-all rumour spreading, targeted slanders, and clandestine meetings with county councillors and art's colonels.

Proposal No 4 went like this: Invite our rivals around to our apartment to join the editorial board of a new plumbing journal of international significance, with guaranteed gold-standard funding from abroad. The beckoning of conferences galore. Give them each an alluringly fancy title as a kind of peace offering to smooth over previous attempts on their life and reputation. Say 'International Editor', or 'New Plumbing Bongo-Bongo Man' or 'Plumbetry Geronimo'. As an added bait, beg them to bring along their latest work, as much as they can fit into their satchels, for sharing and complimentary appraisal.

When they arrive, compliment them hugely on how beautiful they are in their sarongs and their various tweeds and handcrafted woolens, how distinguished looking are their sidelocks, how eyecatching is the twinkle of their chandeleerings.

Separate them from their writings by telling them we are going to put the type-sheets in an anonymous pile and draw lots on the reading order, so as to be strictly democratic and equal opportunities. Put the writings safely away in the utility room.

Serve the writers canapes, and Lambrusco laced with rohipnol and valium. Tell them the vegetarian guinea pig is in the oven. Put on some hopeful ethnic music. Dance with them. Tell all of them separately that they are fabulous dancers. When, one by one, they begin to complain of exhaustion, sit them down sympathetically around a heavy fire.

As soon as they are all seated and their eyes have started to droop, beat them to death with fire extinguishers.

Afterwards, whenever we have exhausted all of our other enthusiasms and peccadillos, divide their unstained papers among ourselves, using the

methods of the enlightenment.

THE PLUMBING COUNCIL

I applied to the plumbing council for funding for a plumber's wank.

A couple of days later I got a note back saying they were very interested, but they wanted me to come in and talk about it, and would I bring along a sample?

She was very polite, hospitable, thorough, clear, rational, efficient, consoling and evasive. She wasn't a plumber though, so she didn't know a thing about plumbing, even though she said she was a great admirer of our latest set of advanced water features. I told her she could check out my advanced water features anytime.

I hate people, and talking. They disturb me when all I want is to be left alone at my plumbing. Anyway, what could any of us possibly have left to talk about? We're going down, and that's it. No discussion needed.

I certainly haven't got enough time left to talk about anything besides my plumbing.

We cast sighs and glances over and back at each other from across the species barrier. We were both sad because there could be no language that would suit the two of us.

After ten minutes she flopped forward onto her desk, head first. She had fallen asleep, a sign of great ambition in her line of work. Or she'd had an aneurysm. Even better. Definite promotion. Anyways, I put the sample jar down on the desk and left without a sound.

The sample wasn't mine.

The next note arrived by courier that afternoon. My request for funding had been granted by emergency session of the plumbers' council, on strict condition that my plumber's wank be presented to the plumbing council assembly only, on a once-off basis, in secret session, immediately.

On the whole, the general public wasn't ready for plumbers' wanking, they felt.

That was fine by me. I don't care who's watching. Or what they do with it after I'm finished. As long as I get the pay-off.

To make it across to the plumbing council as soon as possible I shot the courier dead and stole his Harley Davidson. I revved it up and rode it down footpaths

and cycling lanes and across the bowling lawns of old folk homes. Some of the bowling oldies thought I was a mosquito and tried to swat me with their crutches. They threw gramophones and monocles and magic lanterns at me.

The greatest thrill was the electron-heat of the courier's bottom seeping up into my rectum from the red leather seat. The last of his life being absorbed into mine.

We were in the plumbing council's secret underground dungchamber. I was on stage in the dark. The spotlight was on the audience. They had arranged themselves into an organogram. The chief plumber was on top of the organogram in full regalia. The chief plumber was lean, but he was weighed down hugely by all his brass and copper medallions. The two beneath were grimacing with the effort of carrying him, the three beneath them even more so, and so on. At the bottom of the organogram there were about two hundred emerging plumbers. Some of them were under such strain their eyes had popped and their brain sponge was spilling out of their eye sockets. They had morphine needles hanging out of their necks to help them deal with the inconvenience. No way were they going to lose their places.

I explained to the audience that they, not I, would be doing the wanking. They were delighted. I said the only rule was no funny business, nothing mutual.

Everyone began rhythmically manipulating their troublesome regions as soon as I set the projector reeling. The screen showed a small silent waterfall near Cappoquin in Co Tipperary.

It worked. After a few minutes a seismic orgasm shuddered up and down the plumbing council organogram.

Afterwards we took time out for some audience feedback.

'Here', they chorused, 'is a plumbing with feeling in it, a plumbing that makes its audience feel something too. At last'.

MY TENURE IN THE WHITEHOUSE COMES TO AN END

I was Sheen she threw me out finally the grump for picking at the white chocolates fore the white sauce dinner got served

Didn't think she could even see me there from the other end of the white dining hall across the white oval yoke just the two of us in white-suit white-dress at the weekly white appointment must have had her bloody eyes whitened and re-pointed

Latest in a long string of domestic disappointments I could never satisfy Nancy White in love Nancy White is a cavegirl and a thug

Like that time I was drunk with my ex-white jocks downaround mankles stumbled back heavy on the ex-white fluffy superheated toilet seat the white toilet burst causing red-brown flood and of course I couldn't plug it with my fist but the hole in the ivory floor of the bathroom wasn't I no one wouldn't was my brother Roxy smashed it quand he was dancing round stocious elephants but sure I took the blame for him as usual

That same day I spy mother white through the white arch with the vicious white lions on it pass by tiny lost in the throng of the dead of all neighbourhoods she is drunk too the way a sparrow would be drunk heading wrong way being argumentative futile pathetic flapping hot-headed flapping to convince the white life heat she isn't dead she isn't one of those dead types oh no don't the officers know who her son is get the officer in charge down here see her now let through immediately pieces of her mind let back to the land of the living special pass or else so help her bricks ton of god you'll due the ray the white life heat were having none of it didn't even answer probably get a boozy old crank like her shouting out about a presidential type son every twenty three seconds she is carried away like a twig in the currents of mud so hard to sit and watch your mother go like that but heh what can I do I got enough sparrow rescue on already close the white blinds I can order that I'm Vade Nadrol I'm the president drunk or sober

Nancy had another president in waiting ready in the wing on my way out introduced myself didn't look like me atall was a green woman white make-up much too short said Aoife was her name relatives from Donegal in Rio or Bombay in Tipperary but they stretched her legs shaved his tits and cut a face of mine from the face mountain that was that don't let them mould your face and reaperduce your expressions even leading men are replaceables

Washington's not that pleasant anyhow I wouldn't recommend I can see it ain't

exactly music city now I've only got a white wine suit white hole throat white
geetarmonicand my three white chords of the night-white truth so I'm on the
road on the hunt easyfree ridin hobo lookin out for unwatched tracks gonna
jump a pig truck gonna go rockabilly with the locks gonna head on west catchin
sparks buskin off-trail all the way at the corners of Littlesquares Littlepeoples
Littlevilles allsummerlong then gonna go caravan in piney Aspen ice and snow
should tide me over writin songs and cookin honey mushroom hooch for the
winter months waddya reckon?

Bio: Dave Lordan's is a 34 year old Irish writer and performer whose debut poetry collection *The Boy in The Ring* (Salmon, 2007), won the Patrick Kavanagh Award, and The Strong Award for best first collection by an Irish writer. He has performed his work at numerous venues and festivals throughout Ireland and Europe. His first play 'Jo Bangles' will go into production recently enjoyed a sell out run in Dublin. His second poetry collection *Invitation to a Sacrifice* is due from Salmon in July 2010.