

A Really Large Limerick

"Motherfuck the motherfuckin' coda."

Guitar Slim, a recording session

I admit I am, as everyone will be, captured  
by habits. There is no reason for this.  
Sex, even when it ignites, always leads  
to a falling away, a castoffed candle grave  
as a silent movie about a Queen's death.  
Impotence becomes no big deal. You can easily  
explain the whys. Say: ~~yo~~ur heavy food  
has unsettled my vision and balance; ~~yo~~ur child  
is thirty feet away; you are black,  
I am nothing; I don't want kids and their pacts  
of suicide; after the second abortion  
your father wanted to shoot me, anything,  
an image more powerful than this closed fist.  
It is true I have a headache--I live among  
Jèwhaters and talk-show wannabes  
and like a surgeon I turn away from  
what I've revealed, what friends' diseases  
have been brought to surface.  
I stare at animals and can't understand  
them so I will merely \_\_\_\_\_ survive, become a mole,  
lashed to the walls of my endless tunnels,  
leading south. Thanks for the invitation,  
but another girl has just died, begging  
for scraps, like you here. Mourn with me.

You, Ann, feared letting your breath out.  
A hater of nature, you had around you everything  
but lived best with nothing, and its grey sky.  
When we inched near you, you took two steps  
back, a crack-tinged game of Mother  
May I, but suicide? You didn't ask us.

(Cont.)

("Limerick," cont., no break)

You liked, it seemed to us through our binoculars,  
boys with Jesus tattooed over their hearts,  
or older, fatter, married men  
still playing lousy football in their sleep;  
you needed pot by the plane load, creating  
vague memories of 3.2 semesters at Kent,  
GPA or blood-alcohol level, we forget.  
We eventually moved back to the cheap seats  
and watched with awed horror your career,  
the comic springboarding from one disaster  
to another, your flirty freefalls  
into twisted nets, a tipsy aerialist  
perfecting the rational courage  
to play to an empty house, finally,  
William Tell by yourself. Still,  
it pisses us off deeply  
to see you twin sister almost faint  
into your grave; we can't accept  
that you failed to call a fiftieth time;  
we know now that you knew then well  
that your beautiful blonde-dyed head  
would handle only the first bullet  
leaving plenty for us, your true audience,  
before the priests prayed away the evidence.

I live alone, far from the playgrounds  
and courts, too passive, unlike you,  
to slander flags and fathers. I stay here,  
indoors, and refuse to chase girls driven  
by desires. I had to hire an illegal alien  
with a name impossible to pronounce  
to nibble freely on my fingers, curbing  
one more bad habit. The days go fast.

(Cont.)

("Limerick," cont., no break)

Ann, I miss you and your platinum promise.  
 Your dreams have become our pains; I can't end  
 poems with puns or flourishes now.  
 Your finale is enough of a climax.  
 When I wrote that my maid and enemy,  
 my friend Miss Something, knelt by me,  
 and possessed by memories of her disposed Shah  
 and of sex in Tehran at gunpoint and of jewels  
 choking her young neck, — whispered  
 "Is it Nantucket or Pawtucket you won't take me  
 to?" Very funny. I meant, fuck it.

Wentham:

Hope Anne's misery creeps out of this rough -  
 drafty jungle. Most of the rest of us still live, but  
 I think it's like a bunch of people standing in  
 line for aspirin when they are suffering from undiagnosed  
 brain cancer. I know I would never live in a town that  
 won a world series. The Giants are pissing me off.  
 I may move to Hoboken in Spring - the litacs' bloomings,  
 the statues of Sinatra - and bitchslap the first Springsteen fan  
 I find. There are only 5 bands I listen to - Feellies,  
 Fugazi, Flipper, Frank, and the Fucking Melvins. Don't forget  
 to lean when you take a hard turn. Love, peace, and

be healthy: MB