

Green

William Gillespie



Series.1

To:
4 Tenants

From:
Henri Bossnoss, Esteemed Landlord

Concerning:
\$900 collective overdue Rent

GENTLEMEN;
COUGH IT UP OR EVICT BY FRIDAY.
-HB

* * * * *

We are all dying of something slow & incurable.
We all believe that there is something More Important.
We don't like to talk to people who don't.
It is not comforting to believe that we are guided by hope that will never be realized or defined.
Some of us choose to believe in a Divine Presence (which for Divine reasons has chosen not to believe in some of us). That is a popular one. The rest of us consider it weak &// foolish to believe that we exist to fulfill some Divine purpose: Human Paperwork.
We bury our optimism before it dies and complete our lives.
Everyone suffers from an ability to see things as they really aren't. The human mechanism is unusually adaptive. Thoughts are shaped by actions are shaped by stimuli.
We try to reachieve the rewardingest ones. Where there are no powerful ideas, selfishness negotiates purpose.
With these qualities irretrievably locked beneath his sleek black shoulderlength hair Sledge (a hasty collage of bills enfolded in pocket (enough minus pack of smokes, mostly ones)) walks into the airconditioned ornately furnished mezzanine of Bossnoss Manor. The servant tenuously granted him the privilege of remaining in an arched marble sitting room until Mr. Bossnoss could be extricated from his Activities. Sledge did not appreciate the magnitude of this generosity. He was not content to wait in the waiting room. Disgusted after a short and contemptuous perusal of objects de la art Sledge left the room altogether.
..?..

"i do one and i can't go on." Chintzy Grateful Dead tapestries. Colored lightbulbs. Thick incense. Fogged red cylinder on coffee table. Sleeve Bossnoss scraped tar from elbow of brass plumbing coupling. Sigh. Slender flame sprang from end of Bic and lipsuction bubbling black water tunnel released chuck smoke. Train disappeared into mouth. Eyes closed mostly. Thoughts voyage through psyche like lost radio transmissions. Static. He sat embedded in foambleeding couch dried eyes unblinking observation of a poorly tuned TV. "i need to quit. i will have one more and it will be the last ever in my life ever. one more for eternity." He has smoked two more when he catches on. "why do i ganjulate continuously?" Sleeve wondered unenthusiastically. He did several bongos forgetfully. Knock knock. "come in." Parallelogram of light widened on carpet. Attention followed gaze up into doorway where Sledge grinned propped in frame lean angular unkempt American Indian blended Vietnamese. "yeah?" Sleeve wondered aloud.

"just sniffing around. you smoke a lotta herb?"

"no."

"sell it?"

"no. but i will because my dad just took away my allowance."

"yeah?"

"i stayed out too late."

"i'll give you \$500 for an ounce."

..?..

"do i really wanna write this paper?" Slugg moaned inserting another dreary sheet into typewriter. Sigh. Loathsome textbook terrain. Open and piled on autopsy table marked with fluorescent yellow dissection scars. Slugg stares at keys absent & paralytic. Dissipating attention wandered from expectant page to ant trekking clumsily through unswept floorboard details. Eastward ant followed crack it was unable to cross. Slugg toed ashtray in its path. Ant circumnavigated and continued to wall brief indecision then south. Slugg quite distinctly heard basement window forced aside and two bootheels hit cement floor. Sledge had just entered secretly through tiresome surreptitious rituals. Spudd (by default) was watching television while Flinch (likewise) had just started playing loud record. Saxophone tangents filtered through ceiling. Interest. "is it?"

Exit Slugg's room. Outside door murmur television. Encouched Spudd flares another convenient Marlboro. Can of Budweiser cocked in left fist, volume control in right. Sigh. Slugg up stairs and enters room on right minimal & disheveled. Flinch's records were shuffled unfiled throughout eight crates stacked in two columns four high. Incredible weight was thus concentrated in four square feet of floorspace. This (avoidable therefore) unfortunate distribution of mass caused trampolining of floor underneath adjacent turntable. Slugg's entrance thus caused worn needle to trip grooves. Flinch before ancient speakers leafing selectively through sleazy magazine looked up angrily.

"watch it."

"is this earthbound by king crimson?"

"yeah. how'd you know?"

Slugg stared at sleeve blank black with elegant white seriffed lettering and repressed unexpected respect for Flinch.

"mind if i take this downstairs and tape it?"

Flinched. "i don't really loan out records anymore.

i used to loan them out all the time but"

"but what?"

(shrug)

Chewing on animosity Slugg descended stairs. Spudd had been peeing for an extraordinarily long time in (only) bathroom upstairs. A stream slackened into separate droplets then unsteadily cessated resonant amongst wallpipes. Slugg reentered his room to Sledge grinning from reclination on bed, boots propped.

Slugg (indignant): yes?

"gotta surprise for you" with which Sledge tossed a package on Slugg's open history text. Neglecting venom, Slugg held smooth pillow of grass wrapped in glassy plastic to fluorescence and prodded compressed fibrous forest interwoven red threads pyramidal crystals adorning plethora of sawtoothed fronds within which speckled eggs were embedded. Slugg cracked dried saliva seal. Sniff. Blink. Nostrils dilate in disbelief. Slugg proceeded to relick&roll bag with fingertips calculating twig thicknesses & seedcount.

"oz?"

"y."

"how much?"

"g."

"no can do."

"you have rich friends."

"no will do."

"i spent our rent."

"!"

"better ask around."

Sledge exited footsteps past oblivious Spudd to heave himself onto bed of squeaky coils, wheeze himself promptly to sleep.

Slugg hid. His place was a metal box concealed in a corner of his closet where he kept his diary. He commenced a flurry of inscription. "unfortunately it seems i am going to have to renew old acquaintances."

..?..

"i may as well get stoned: i'm already hungry." Logic of ill. Next afternoon with Slugg enclashed, unemployed Flinch continuing ongoing attendance to Slugg's diary discovered closetlodged skunk. "beats windowshoplifting." Flinch put prize in pants & retired upstairs to consider it listening to a (Japanese?) XTC EP (Live & More) with live version of Scissor Man. Kneeling on his battered mattress he pinches initial percentage then divines ideal place to hide Remainder: a stone never overturned.
"do actions have consequences?"
..?..

"breakfast of champions."

Spudd awoke at that moment on stained mattress in room across hall in questionable boxers. Rose. Stretched like a victor. Lit up a Marlboro. Tapped ashcolumn into nearby Budweiser can. Donned tattered Playboy bathrobe. Jogged briefly in place. Took couple deft jabs at mirror. Overcome by sudden urgency exits for shower room.

Clenched humorless lips kneeled before elliptical rim wracking antibreakfast spewing spasms. Spat. Showered. Lather rivulets rinsed down cracked porcelain into rusted drain. Moving carefully, Spudd descended to kitchen for Folgers in styrofoam. Assumed couch & controller.

"if you run out of smokes you never have to worry. you'll get more before you die" Spudd mentioned aloud although there was nobody around to ignore him. "if i could take one long shit and be finished shitting for the rest of my life i would. but i would still fart."

..?..

"cool: you have a pooltable. so do we."

"yeah. that's spudd. spudd, this is stave angelfish." mentioned Slugg in incidental introduction. Slugg shrugged & Stave followed into Slugg's room where Slugg shuts door.

"you'll like this stuff."

"i better man last shit i had i smoked right through man. here's g.5."

"cool man. it's right here in my closet."

"stop. leave it hidden. my dad's at the door."

"shit: police."

..?..

"time sure flies when your short term memory is corrupt & decrepit from alcohol abuse & sleep deprivation" Sledge explained. He came in through the bathroom window/detected unfamiliar tune. By default intrudes unhesitantly Flinch's room.

"& the fish mumbled up:

hey man i'm only hearing it in one ear
so a crew of guys came down from Blackthorn
with a subindividual monopoly coaster
& they heaved in through
& they lowered the pulley baby
& they rammed it in: ugh
so the fish had stereo
& the fish said hey what's for breakfast?"

Two Halves For Price of One (Lope at Hive/Only Stones Remain) by Soft Boys. Flinch attempted to remain cool caught in act of awkwardly constructed cigarette inhalation. Choking exploding kernels. He attempted to rescue with numb fingertips from floorboards smoldering ember. Pain. Selfconsciousness. Oppressive thirst. Sledge carved grins.

"smoke a lotta hemp?"

"oh sure yeah yeah yeah man."

"buy it?"

"sell it."

"yeah? how much?"

"\$500 quarter."

"ha. i know who you got it from."

"yeah?"

"yeah."

"don't tell him."

"you stole it?"

"so?"

"it's not his. it's mine."

"it's neither of yours."

"where is it?"

(shrug)

Flinch reclined clumsily fumbling crooked spliff. Sledge masquerading grins rudely & abruptly drags Flinch to feet with left fist with other invades Flinch's jeans. It's not there. Knockless entrance of unbemused Slugg who flatly declares.

"come downstairs: cops are here."

..?..

"sigh." Lieutenant Dallas Angelfish adjusted mirrored shades at televised checkers tournament. Couch. Company of Spudd: left fist COCACOLA right RemoteControl. Eyes vacant, lips smoking. Angelfish adjusting holster stared out window. Across alleyway Mrs.Blandale stared back with determined patience. Flinch fell past pane into loud garbage cans. Angelfish blinks. Flinch disentangled & fled. Mrs.Blandale retreated to another perspective. Sledge & Slugg, grin & consternation, descended staircase & clumsily sat on pooltable. Angelfish addressed them indistinctly.

"okay well now it seeems the thing of it is i guess you boys owe mister bossnoss \$900 rent or something like that. now if you can't come up with that well i don't know what's gonna happen. could be one of you boys is going to have to come downtown. i mean; i don't know. you got any money on ya?"

"no."

"no."

"funny thing is henri told me one of you came by his house yesterday i guess it was but disappeared before he could talk to you. thing is i think at first he thought maybe it was because you stole something. he wasn't too happy about having his servants run a complete inventory of all his valuables. nothing's turned up missing yet but it will take another weeeek or so before they've counted everything. what happened was after that henri went to the lower level to visit his son's wing he caught him smoking a little 'pot.' you know? but sleeev's a good kid a really good kid & he confessed everything. got anything to say about that?"

"no."

"no."

"well now the kid said a fella fitting this description lessee long black hair kinda dazed & thin biker jacket. that'd be probably you. well when henri bossnoss asked his son if a mangy hippy had sold him the 'dope' the kid said yeah. now here's what we can do. either you confess everything, i search the entire house, or i'll make you a special offer because i'm a sporting man:

we play a little pool to find out who goes to jail."

Angelfish glanced at Spudd who wasn't listening, absorbed in fishing. Sledge & Slugg stared at one another.

..?..

"this is a special kind of cutthroat. in normal cutthroat one person wins. in my cutthroat one person loses. if it's one of you, that one of you comes downtown. if it's me you both go freee.
in cutthroat threee people are represented by five balls each. shooting in turn each tries to knock in the other ten. in the event of scratch two balls are brought back into play: one for each of the other players. as soon as one of us loses our balls that person loses & the game ends.

Sledge will be 1 2 3 4 5
I will be 6 7 8 9 10
Slugg will be 11 12 13 14 15"

With gloves & sunglasses Angelfish racked & lagged with unnecessary precision cueball so close to bumper that he could just slide his partially completed police report through the gap. Angelfish broke. Impact drove 1 & 11 in.

"15 corner pocket. sledge face it i've already got you for contributing to delinquency. 5ball corner pocket. slugg i got you for overdue rent. 13 side."

13 decelerated on beerspot, missed.
Slugg's turn. Wordlessly 4 side. 9 corner missed.
Sledge silent. 9 side. Screwup 7.

"3ball corner using the beerspot to create spin that will arc it around 8. now suppose i were to search the entire house. what would i find? 2ball corner. oo that came close didn't it?"

Slugg misses improbable attempt at 2.
Sledge slops 8 in. Next shot fails to connect.

"talk to me Slugg. 12ball will collide with 14 sinking 12 in side, 14 a graceful banking pirouette into corner. perfect. what would i find in your room? 13. made it but scratched.

3 & 13 back into play. game passes to Slugg."
"10 corner. i don't know anything. 6 far corner."

Sledge: 6 corner. "me neither." 7ball side pocket.

"you've a lot of nerve contradicting the good word of a bossnoss. i'm going to sink the 2ball in that pocket using my 7ball which will first bank off this cushion. i've outdone myself. we each have a single ball. you've as good as confessed. either of you have anything to add? no? 3 corner & 13 side. click. only the 7 remains. you both have the right to confess everything."

..?..

distant ricochet of billiards murmurs filtered down to me through sofacushions. sighing flatulent mass of Spudd's cigarettebutt rolls down from above. my plastic encasing melts away from heatpoint & is consumed by flame singing soothing singes my fibrous tentacles curl back in orange ecstasy flaming tendrils awrithe madness joy i am escaping my fertile leafy form & slithering upwards into the nostrils of the Spudd the Sledge the Slugg the Stave & the Lieutenant. believe this much: i am good shit. their resolve dissolves burning rope bridges come unstrung spanning vast chasms. i set everyone in the green house on fire & leave to search the neighborhood for impressionable minds.
..?..

Myopia ruins everything. Plausible dreams are memories.
Slugg barreling down the highway in Spudd's van. Cash in pocket. Typewriter in back beside Spudd's snoring form. Sledge cutting his hair in the passenger seat. Dallas Angelfish, a religious man, would refuse to listen to his Stave's explanation. Flinch would assume that his records had been destroyed by the fire. They would never know they were wrong.
Nobody would miss MaryJane. Sun set before them.



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