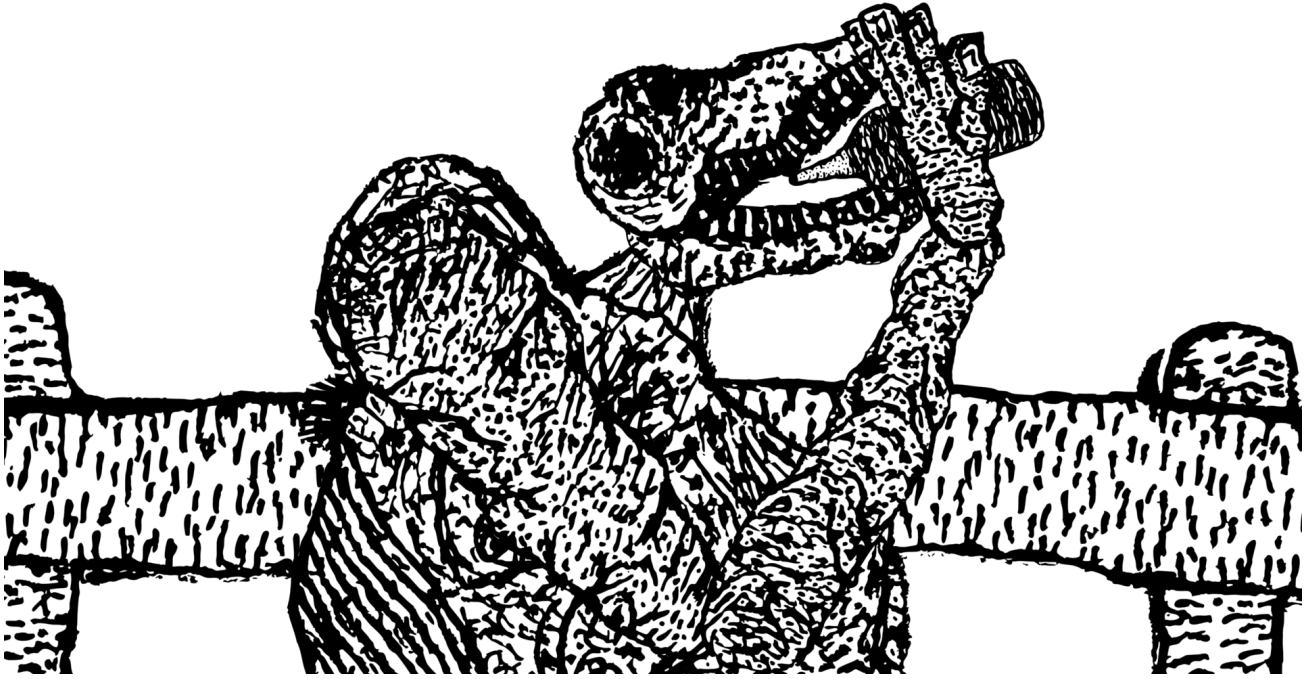


Addicts Idiots And Losers



Volume I **free**



Trigger Warning: The content may not be suitable for children or those with a fragile psyche.

Rat People Must Kill Humans Publishing

Addicts Idiots And Losers Volume I

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Tomatoes on The Way to Seattle

We are sitting on a bench near a church. I imagine that it is filled with television screens, and electric candles plugged into the wall. There is a large clock at the top of the spire of the church, whose hands are powered by batteries, and the hands show us that it is one pm, and the artificial bell sounds in its hollow way to tell us that it is one o'clock.

Gupp and Mike are talking about tomatoes and I am sitting here and listening to them talk for I have nothing better to do with my day then spend it with these people who I don't care about.

Gupp has a face like a character actor who always plays a villain with a complex and tragic backstory. He has deep lines cut into his face, carved there by a scalpel for pumpkins.

Mike has a round head like a soccer ball. His head is hollow and made of rubber, and you imagine passing his head back to the children who kicked it across the street by accident so that they can continue their game on the cement playground with their shoes acting as the goal posts.

Gupp and Mike are talking about the tomatoes they saw while driving up from California to Seattle. They are making great and useless plans surrounding these tomatoes.

“I never saw tomatoes like that before. Endless fields of tomatoes encircled by a low fence. Nobody in sight. Everything automated. Self-driving machines tending to the tomatoes, picking them, automatic sprinklers watering them. It would be an easy thing to take those tomatoes. Nobody would notice,” says Gupp.

“God I could use one of those tomatoes right now, some were even bursting open at their seams, they were so full of themselves,” Mike says, turning towards me.

“You idiot. We’re not going to eat those tomatoes. We’re going to sell them. We’ll drive to the farm at night and fill our trunk with them. We’ll bring them to the farmers market in the morning,” says Gupp.

“That’s a good idea,” says Mike.

“Of course it is, we’ll become rich off tomatoes. We’ll never have to work another day in our lives.”

Gupp and Mike do not understand, one cannot become rich off stolen tomatoes.

Half listening to their banter, I think of a woman whom I once loved. I wonder where she is living now. I imagine a house with large glass doors that encompass a modern kitchen with frying pans hanging from hooks attached to the ceiling. The frying pans are always clean. I imagine a bedroom with a circular window bisected by wooden struts, and beyond it a single oak tree, gnarled and leafless, its arms reaching up towards the sky. The tree is her only friend, and its roots are full of all the secrets she never told me.

It is a grey day outside and nobody else is about, except for a woman searching for food in trash cans and rambling about the end of the world.

“Let’s go to a bar,” says Gupp.

“I could really use a drink.” says Mike.

“Sure,” I say.

And in that way the tomatoes are temporarily abandoned.

We walk the few blocks away from the park to the bar. It is a sad black building with a neon sign, only three letters illuminated. The letters read JAC. Inside, the place is mostly empty. It is one thirty, too early for all but the losers of the world to begin drinking.

“I’ll have a beer,” I say to the bartender.

The other two order whiskey.

Gupp and Mike begin to talk, and I do not want to be here. I want to be somewhere else. The inside of my apartment maybe, by myself. But it is a Sunday afternoon, and the entire world is lost, and I have nothing else to do.

“You know those coin operated machines? The ones that give out bubble gum and plastic toys to children for a quarter?” says Gupp.

“Yeah, I know ‘em,” says Mike.

“Those people who run ‘em make a mint. It’s easy money. They just go around in a truck collecting all those mountains of coins every week.”

“God that sounds good, we would never have to work a day in our lives. All we would have to do is drive around collecting money and depositing useless bits of plastic,” says Mike.

They do not understand what work is.

“We’ll need a truck,” says Gupp.

“How will we get one?”

“We can steal one, there are plenty of trucks around.”

“What about all the machines?”

“We’ll order them from Chinese factories. I’m sure they are very cheap.”

“But we’ll need some money. How will we get the money?”

“I’ll figure something out.”

They are old tape recordings left in storage lockers, covered with dust, and forgotten.

I look into my empty glass and see my face reflected back at me, grey and distorted, grey like the clouds outside of the bar.

I order another beer.

Gupp and Mike keep ordering whiskeys. Empty shot glasses sit in front of them forming small rows.

A man, sitting alone at a table gets up and starts walking over to us. He is drunk, and his legs are unsteady. He sways as if there is a strong wind in the bar. He is a large man. He has very small eyes. They are completely black. They are like two holes in his skull. Gupp has been staring at him, and now he is coming over to start something.

There is an ocean between us and this man, and he is crossing this ocean. He is crossing this ocean in a boat which he built from fallen trees, felled by his own hand when he was a lumberjack in his previous life. He has crossed this ocean and now he stands before us, ready to start that which he has come to start.

“What the fuck are you looking at?” asks the man.

He is talking to Gupp. He is made of anger. His anger has consumed him and is now all he is. His anger comes out in a furious torrent over small things, like a man looking at him from across the bar and smiling.

Gupp has been waiting for this moment. Every aspect of his existence has led him to this. This moment is his fate, and he can see all that is about to happen with perfect clarity.

“I’m looking at your goddamn ugly fucking face,” says Gupp.

This is the line he is destined to say. He has spent many nights in front of the mirror practicing this line and imagining the events that will come after it.

“Oh yeah?” says the man.

“Yeah.”

The man winds up to punch Gupp. The man winds up very far away. The punch is like a long-distance flight from Tokyo to San Francisco. Gupp can see the punch coming, but he doesn't move out of the way. The plane is in China, now it is in Egypt, now it is over the Atlantic Ocean, now it has landed at San Francisco International Airport and Gupp is lying on the ground, blood pouring from his broken nose.

Very quickly Gupp has taken a pistol out of his pocket. It is a small snubbed nosed pistol, and he holds it as if it is a toy. The shots are very loud, they echo throughout the bar.

The man holds his stomach with his hands, blood pours through the spaces between his fingers. He looks down, his face is full of surprise. He cannot believe that his body is full of that thick red liquid flowing from him. He collapses to the ground and doesn't move anymore.

Gupp's face is pure white snow.

"Jesus Christ you killed him! I can't believe it, you killed him." Mike repeats over and over again.

"Shut up, just shut the fuck up," screams Gupp.

Gupp sits there for a few seconds. Everything is very quiet. Then the two of them get up and run out of the bar.

"Jesus Christ you killed him, I can't believe you killed him," leaves the bar with them.

The bartender is also pale, he is pale like a dying flower. He picks up the phone and dials 911.

In silence, we wait for the cops to arrive.

An ambulance comes, and they take the body into the back of it. The police officers question me about what happened, and for some reason I lie and say that I don't know the guy, that I had just met him, that I never learned his name. I give a very vague description of Gupp which is not altogether accurate.

And while I am questioned, while uniformed men and women are photographing the blood-stained floor, while they are taking swabs of cotton covered with invisible DNA and placing them in vials, while they are discussing the best way to set up a perimeter to catch the suspects, I am thinking of that woman, alone in her glass house, with its single tree made of secrets, and wondering why she left me.

END

Thank

you



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