

# Days of Dazed Confusion

A diver is silhouetted against a bright, glowing light source, possibly an opening in a cave or a large window. The light creates a strong lens flare effect, radiating across the scene. The diver is positioned in the lower right quadrant, facing away from the viewer towards the light. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and ethereal.

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Scarf Publications  
2002 Chapbook

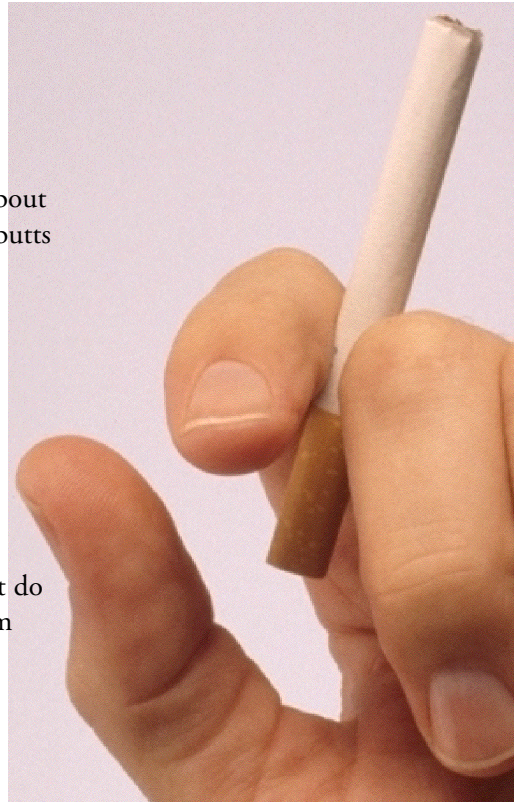
# Loss of Innocence

he was a hired hand  
a dirty hired hand  
who looked as if  
he had been dirty  
since the day he was born  
and he was hired on  
at the tomato farm which joined  
the playground of the school  
where his tiny, dirty, rusty  
mobile home sat motionless  
except for his dirty wife  
and his five dirty kids  
who continually rattled  
the rusty, dirty  
tin can of a home  
and the kids at school  
felt sorry for those dirty kids  
because they had nothing but  
dirty faces, dirty hands, dirty feet  
dirty, worn, torn clothes

too small to wear  
and i asked my mom  
if i could give the kids  
some of my old clothes  
and she said "yes"  
and so i did  
and i asked my mom  
if i could give the dad  
some money for food  
for his family  
and she said "he is a drunk"  
"he won't spend the money on  
food"  
and i said "please"  
and she said "okay"  
and so i did  
and he drank the money

# Second-Hand Smoke

we walked through  
the subdivision  
on the eve of adolescence  
me and my friend  
looking along roadsides  
peering in ditches  
searching in driveways  
for cigarette butts  
with enough tobacco  
left to light up  
for a puff or two  
more than a few times  
we found what we  
were looking for  
while neither of us  
gave a thought to things like  
tuberculosis, lung cancer  
emphysema, black lungs  
things parents warn children about  
it was me wanting to find the butts  
it was me with the matches  
it was me who was fascinated  
with second-hand smoke  
seeing smoke inhaled  
deep into the lungs  
and blown out again  
it was my friend who  
supplied the lungs  
who served as my proxy  
who did that which i dared not do  
it was my friend through whom  
i lived vicariously that day  
while keeping my lungs clean  
and that is when i learned  
how black my heart could be



# The Day of the Trees

no one had ever seen anything like the thing that happened that day during my sophomore year at St. Joe High the teachers and guidance counselors the principle and administrative staff were all quite astounded at the way in which a perpetually divided student body rallied and joined together in solidarity under a unifying banner of protest which read simply: "Save the Trees" who would have thought that the jocks and freaks, preps and nerds would have ever joined ranks as radical environmentalists the likes of which can usually only be seen at Greenpeace rallies and protests? but what fascinated me most about what happened that day had nothing to do with the fact that the entire student body defiantly refused to go to class or that students of every stripe joined together in throwing their bodies in front of the bulldozers

threatening to lay waste to the  
trees surrounding the school  
or that news teams from all over  
the state descended on the school  
like flies on something that smells  
what truly blew my mind that day  
was that everyone in the state  
believed that an entire student body  
had passionately and selflessly  
come together for the noble cause  
of saving trees when every student  
at the high school that day  
knew full well that it was only  
about saving the trees because  
the trees were where the students  
smoked their pot before school



# Dog Show

in the twilight of our teens  
we drank our cerebral cortexes  
completely out of commission  
me and my drinking buddy  
and then we contributed to the  
delinquency of two canines  
a sheep dog and a beagle  
by pouring vodka  
in their dog food  
and we laughed hysterically  
as they galloped and raced  
time and time again  
up the stairway  
as the stumbled and tumbled  
time and time again  
down the stairway  
we laughed like hyenas in heat  
until like the delinquent dogs  
we too were falling down drunk  
and we laughed ourselves  
out of the house  
into the car  
onto the highway  
and into a ditch  
where i swirled to make  
my drinking buddy hurl  
where he hurled the likes  
of dog food all over me  
where he hurled a fist  
into the side of my face  
i'm the sheep dog and  
you're the beagle!  
he barked as blood ran  
down my ear



# Nova

they went down from  
nowheresville to Florida  
after graduating high school  
two prodigals in a chevy nova  
“going nova” as they said  
with more pot than money  
in their pockets  
with dreams of freedom and fun  
in the Florida sun  
impish immigrants, restless refugees  
living on the edge of limbo  
in search of a “promised land”  
naive nomads, wanna-be wanderers  
seeking some cheap thrills  
willing to live in a tent  
until they could afford to rent  
with jobs lined up as delivery boys  
at the same West Palm Beach furniture store  
and here was their fork in the road  
here was their event horizon  
here was their moment of decision  
to work or not to work  
in the morning . . .

they went to Key West  
where they fried their brains and  
burned bridges to everywhere  
until nowhere was the only  
place they had left to go  
and they found themselves  
powerfully, irresistably pulled  
into what remained of the nova  
and back to nowhere

# Load of Fun

so you think it's fun  
to get really loaded  
to load up the truck  
with buddies loaded  
with six packs of buds  
so you think it's fun  
to go four wheeling  
to do a few donuts  
three in the front  
three in the back  
a six pack of buddies  
each loaded with a  
six pack of buds  
so you think it's a  
load of fun  
to swirl the truck so fast  
that it nearly rolls  
because the truck has  
a shiny new roll bar  
to keep everyone safe  
so you roll with laughter

when you think of doing  
something as fun  
as all that  
let me tell you  
about all that  
this happened  
with my classmates  
one of them  
got his arm torn off  
when it rolled under  
the shiny new roll bar  
he said only one thing  
to the paramedics  
as they were rushing him  
to the emergency room  
can you put my arm back on?  
he said this one thing  
over and over again  
before he arrived  
at the hospital DOA



# Saved at Youth Camp

at youth camp  
we got drunk  
on cheap wine  
for seven days  
we swam drunk  
played games drunk  
went to chapel drunk  
learned about Jesus drunk  
went to the train tracks drunk  
shouted at an oncoming train drunk  
played chicken with an oncoming train drunk  
got called every name in the book by my drunk best friend drunk  
got tackled and thrown off the tracks by my drunk best friend drunk  
rolled down in a ditch beside the train tracks with my drunk best friend  
drunk  
listened to the train go by from the bottom of the ditch with my drunk  
best friend drunk

# Ragweed

he had a name  
for the “weed”  
he deemed  
too weak  
to smoke  
he called it  
“ragweed”  
until during  
the summer  
dryspell  
after weeks  
turned  
to months  
and “weed”  
was nowhere  
to be found  
in desperation  
he pulled up  
some genuine  
ragweed  
dried it out  
ground it up  
rolled it up  
and smoked it  
giving himself  
the best asthma  
he ever had

# Dry Spell

had the dry spell  
never come  
the summer of  
his nineteenth year  
after he had  
smoked dope  
with regularity  
ever since  
his fifteenth year  
he would have  
never known  
that he was still a  
fifteen year old  
walking around  
in the body of a  
nineteen year old

# Dance of Denial

it is not  
the drinking  
that you love  
so you say  
it is the dancing  
you love to dance  
you love to dance  
all the time  
it is just that you  
hate to dance  
when you are  
not drunk



# Man on a Mission

i once knew a man  
who would speak of  
nothing but religion  
whenever he was drunk  
which was most of the time  
but whenever he was sober  
which was hardly ever  
he would run from religion  
like a vampire from a cross



# Mummified Alive

what i remember most  
about the drunk  
down the road  
were his rotten teeth  
disintegrating into  
shades of black and brown  
it was like peering into  
the mouth of a mummy  
that is what i remember  
most about him  
along with his  
sunken yellow eyes  
scaly yellow skin  
wrapped around his  
skeleton like a scroll  
and this, his relentless  
determination to  
embalm himself  
with Jack Daniels  
shriveled and die

# Poster Child

there is nothing  
more pathetic  
than the sight of  
a burning cigarette  
protruding through  
a tracheotomy hole



# Prodigy

his brain was such a wonderful place to be  
teeming with life, electricity and fascination  
neuropathways serving as information  
superhighways connecting beautiful cities  
with magical rainforests and grassy meadows  
there was no better world in which to live  
there was no landscape or dreamscape  
filled with more promise  
then drugs poured down acid rain  
on his rainforests and meadows  
acted like pesticides and herbicides  
on things that should not die  
and not knowing what to do  
he did more drugs  
drugs unleashed crime, pollution and poverty  
into the once beautiful streets of his cities  
perpetrated chemical, bio- and cyber-terrorism  
on his most intricate and complex nerve centers  
and not knowing what to do  
he did more drugs  
drugs destroyed everything in their path  
synapses were severed like bridges burned  
and now his head is filled with nothing  
but ghettos, ghost towns and deserts  
he has nowhere to go  
no one and nothing to see  
and spends most of his time  
looking over his shoulder



# Scared Straight

this was the extent of my education at Michigan State University where my best buddy and me went to see another buddy when we were all freshmen at one college or another there was a four-foot bong going round a circle of freshmen looking to get more than just a little buzzed when after only one hit i began to get the sensation that all of the notes to the music we were listening to were becoming disconnected from each other and floating out there in space with more dissonance than i had ever heard before in a song which until that moment had always sounded familiar and so i stood up quickly and told someone to turn off the music and someone said "Is he freaking out?" and i realized that i would indeed freak out if i did not find a way to ride out the psychological roller coaster that i had suddenly found myself on and so i refused to take a second hit of whatever it was because it certainly was not anything i had ever had before and my best bud was still laughing from the hit he took the first time the bong came around to him and had taken a second hit which i thought might not be the best choice he had made up to that point in his life

and it was within seconds of his second hit that he stood up and turned as white as i had ever seen anyone before and he said to me “something is missing” and “it feels like there is a blanket over my head” and this somehow struck me as morbidly funny and i could not shake the thought that maybe we should throw a blanket over his head and throw him in a closet and close the door and it was at that moment that i decided to never do drugs again

# When You Are Tempted

when you are tempted to  
tell yourself that all you are  
doing are recreational drugs  
for recreational purposes  
simply call this image to mind  
the closing remarks of some  
deranged despostic dignitary  
receiving an award at an  
al qaeda awards banquet  
somewhere on the planet  
. . . finally, i wish to thank  
the many young Americans  
who have purchased our  
products and supported our  
cause . . . we couldn't have  
pulled it off without you . . .

# Days of Dazed Confvssion

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scarswopeayjgmd

published in conjunction with

**children  
churches  
& daddies**

*the unreligious, nonfamily-oriented  
literary and art magazine*

ISSN 1068-5154

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Planet Earth, Solar System Milky Way Galaxy, the Universe

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