

Typewriters & Trilobites

By Someone B. Screwinitcha

In the Beginning

The ice cream man, perusing the streets slowly and looking all dapper in his starched and pressed whites, drove down the block slowly, tweaking his dark mustache while sniffing out children and ringing his bell as the bright greens of springtime waved in sweet jasmine filled air. Meanwhile, our impressionable young Peter was playing in his backyard, endlessly basking in sunshine, breathing in heavily leaded automobile fumes whilst counting the change he'd stolen from his mother's coin jar in the kitchen. The sound of the

bell made him twitch and get curiously excited, like when you see someone crushing up white powder with a credit card next to a rolled up twenty dollar bill.

After making his purchase, which consisted of both a toasted almond bar and a bomb pop, he delighted in this good humor, even as the rapidly melting sugary effluvium ran down his arm to his elbow.

Just in case you weren't born yet; back in 1971, there were only three flavors of ice cream you could buy at the store; vanilla, strawberry and chocolate. (All the kinky stuff was sold by a weirdo out of the side of a truck that played nursery rhymes).

His variety was enticing, quite reminiscent of an illegal fireworks selection in someone's garage or the categorical thumbnail view on the home page of any free porn site today.

Strangely enough, the frozen triumvirate of which I write, that multicolored combination of chilled confection sold in stores back in 1971, and

still to this day, was named after the city of Naples, a name which carried with it the implication that the consumer was somehow more cosmopolitan than those who only purchased vanilla.

Peter Durant's house-proud and often wine-stained, fuddled up mother thought that keeping a handsome supply in the ice box identified her family as being rather fancy in comparison to the neighbors.

“Peter, stop licking your toes. It's beneath you.”

Young Peter cared little for the opinions of others back then, especially when it came to Good humor drippings. It could be equally said that he cared very little for the company of others as well. Foregoing bouts of kick-the-can and binky-bop with the other neighborhood children, Peter was more inclined to whittle away the hours alone in the family's garage, playing with himself in a corner.

“I'll catch that spider one of these days!” At least seven spiders inhabited each corner of the

garage and he loved little more than the challenge of trying to catch them.

Catching spiders provided young Peter with a terrific sense of accomplishment, and he relied on that sensation heavily during his early days of wonder as a form of sustenance for his fragile and developing ego.

Aside from hairy spiders, the family's garage was filled to the brim with old and odd things, remnants of more lucrative times in the Durant family history when his grandfather, a clockmaker, was the envy of all.

“Someday...” Peter would say to himself while brushing away the cobwebs that dressed the aging collection of trinkets, broken clocks and frilly treasures like lace upon the corpse of a substantially lumpy sleeping beauty, “All of this will be mine, just like Daddy promised.”

Chapter One

Peter's father was not only a regular beer drinker, but something of a wordsmith as well, "What are you, some sort of ass-pickle? Let me ask you something: Did I raise you to act like a fucktard?"

Although the word *fucktard* would not come into general use until the year 2004 when a middle aged blogger would find himself embroiled in an argument with a woman representing the rights and sentiments of children with Down Syndrome everywhere, after challenging him on the use of the word *retarded* in his short stories, henceforth resulting in his abhorrent rejection of the word

and furthermore leading to the coinage of a new noun; *fucktard*, in order to find a suitable replacement, Peter's father used it at home when he was drinking, which was always.

For some reason, it stuck in young Peter's mind.

“Get out of that garage and get me a beer, ya fucktard.”

Peter's father also referred to him, most undeservedly so, with many other unaffectionate terms of endearment, such as; shrimp dick, kitten nibbler, jerky bits, bat wang, fart sniffer and faggot.

It could be said, and had been uttered quite frequently by many who knew them, that the elder Durants, both mister and the missus, consumed an overabundance of alcoholic beverages clock circling. Keeping abreast of current trends and fashions of the year 1975, when Peter was just about 6 years of age, his parents kept a chilled keg of beer in a mock gandywill next to the milk box on the side of their house.

Everyone who was anyone did so.

The Durants kept theirs next to the chimney, betwixt the milk box and the chimney, that is.

The block Peter grew up on was portent and amiable by anyone's measure. Small houses reminiscent of William Levitt and his cold, grey breath lined the aging sidewalks to be found there, and various species of land turtles still roamed about the neighborhood freely and abidingly, doing anything they pleased as the pesticides that had all so recently hit the market had not killed them off as of yet.

Alcohol, valium, red dye #5, secobarbital and speed were the common drugs of choice in their tight little white bread neighborhood, as marijuana use was still relegated to the ranks of the pinkos, negroes and commie freaks.

Apparently, good Americans did not smoke marijuana in 1975, and, as every churchgoing American patriot knew at the time; the wacky weed only made white women want to have sex with black men who listened to jazz and the

Beatles, and that was still considered bad form in those days.

Anyway, all trivialities aside, the focus of our story, young Peter Durant, barely six years old at the time in question, was covered in iced cream, shirtless and filthy, bean pole-ish in stature, bowl-haired, as was the custom of all young Durants, and skittish when it came to other people, found himself in proud possession of a spider in a Gerber brand baby food jar. In his right hand pocket was his most valued possession, as it was always; a fossilized trilobite his grandpapa had given him. He carried it with him wherever he'd go.

Years later, nearly a hundred and fifty years after the African daisy, brought to the world's attention by none other than Robert Jameson who stumbled upon the flower quite accidentally while on a trip Barberton, this pretty little blossom would be cause for much aggravation to a much older Peter Durant as he found himself verbally slapping many a fucktarty-tart-tart housewife as she stood admiring the incorrectly attributed and

celebrated *Gerber* daisies she'd procured from the florist that day.

“Aren't they the best? I just love them. My little Gerber daisies... I only paid \$5.99 a stem.”

Failing to bite his tongue every time, the somewhat well-rounded and worldly older version of Peter would invariably find himself blurting out, in a state of near uncontrollable agitation, but altogether willingly, “They are Gerberas, you double-A battery burning, cheated-you-way-through-high-school, puckered up, empty-headed facsimile of a latex love doll! GERBERA you idiot! *Gerber* is a brand of fucking baby food you stretched out mouse with tits!”

Peter had a storage house of hyphens, a nearly endless supply, but nowhere near the same volume of tolerance for fucktardedness, especially when it came to botanical classifications, no matter how colloquial or commercial in nature they might be.

Chapter two

1975 was a most fascinating year, which began on a Wednesday, at least on American soil, and, although it is not spoken of in common circles, that year alone marked the beginning of the microcomputer revolution.

In the years that followed, young Peter would find himself temporary resident at the Reynold's Camp for Overstimulated Children for one brutally long week out on Short Island after spending fourteen hours playing Pong with his cousins on a black and white TV.

Pong was the devil, some claimed.

The summer of 1975 welcomed the Watergate Scandal, the first International Women's Year as declared by the United Nations, Space Mountain opened in Disney World, causing people to shit themselves while on vacation, but not from the food, and even caused one thrill seeker to purportedly lose his head.

Margaret Thatcher, a hottie by anyone's standards, became the first female Prime Minister of Britain.

Spider eggs would not hatch from grape bubble gum though for a few more years to come.

1975. Charlie Chaplin was knighted by Queen Elizabeth. The Rocky Horror Show opened on Broadway that year, but would not become the Rocky Horror Picture Show for some time. Bill Gates and Paul Allen founded Microsoft. Busch Gardens Williamsburg Theme Park opened. NASA launched Viking 1 towards Mars with a fanfare of freaktards dressed as little green men escorted by large breasted women wearing glow-in-the-dark pasties, variously tasseled, in order to

hide their riotous and panic inducing nipples from the unevolved American press and general public alike. Riverfront Coliseum would open in Cincinnati and Saturday Night Live, hosted by George Carlin, was aired for the very first time on NBC.

All in all, it was a very good year.

But for our still very young and green tadpole, Peter Durant, it was a year defined by the awkwardness that so often surrounds the developmental stages of one so shy. He was missing a finger; something nobody really talked about, and he had a speech impediment that caused him to speak like a crime boss from a 1920's detective novel whenever he was nervous.

In fact, he sounded a lot like Chauncey the Flat Faced Frog from the Courageous Cat and Minute Mouse cartoons.

“Mwaarh, I need a glass of water before I go to bed, see? If I don't get what I want, there's going to be trouble. Do you hear me, doe eyes? I don't care if you are my mother, see, I'll fill ya full of

lead while you're cookin' flapjacks in that pretty little housedress ya like to prance around in. Mwaarh... I need a RingDing, and make it snappy, sister, I don't have all day."

In the year 1975, if you were six years old, having a nickel was like being a Rockefeller. You could saunter your way down to the candy store with a single, shiny nickel and come back home with a cavity, a bad attitude and still have three pieces of sugar fun-funs left in your bag for later.

Back then they used to squirt little dots of colored sugar onto a long roll of paper, like a cash register receipt, and then force small children, wildly enticed by the prospect of getting a chance to own a foot long strip of this shit, to scrape the sugar dots off with their lower teeth.

It was fucking criminal.

It made you eat paper.

Sadists, every one of those sugar spinning candy makers, including old pecker puller, Mr. Scrumdiddlyumptuous, himself.

Peter and his young friends would stand around outside the Five and Dime trying to see who could get the most cavities until some bully would eventually walk up and try to take their sweets, and then, all jacked up on monosaccharides and feeling both nervous and hyperactive, (They used to refer to that as having sugar muscles) Peter Durant would say something really fucked up like, *“We’re just minding our own business and eating our candy, see? Mwuaahhh, we don’t want any trouble, you understand? Here, why don’t you have one of these Zotz, they fizzle on your tongue when you bite them. Please, just calm down and relax. We’re all friends here, just getting our sugar fix, see? Mwaarh.”*

What all those innocent children did not know then, what no human being prior to the invention of Pop Rocks - who would still not be privy to for another fifty-five Earth years - was that those rainbow colored ticker tape sugar dots were actually the cyphers that would have allowed people of all ages to read the writing on the wall

as it had then, and always had, appeared in the sky above them after sunset each night.

It was a message written in spherical text, a poem fix within the stars.

Oh, how little it is we truly know and understand about our universe.

And how much more do we take for granted?

Chapter Three

Peter's mother and father used to fight all the time. His father was a short, balding man with a really weird belly button and his mother was an ex-stripper, church reformed of course, by all means.

They were both severe alcoholics, and by that, I do not mean they simply liked to drink adult beverages on occasion, like if someone had a baby and opened a bottle of wine with bubbles in it and then offered them a glass. No, they drank after work, in the shower, during breakfast, on escalators, on field trips, at the doctor's, under umbrellas, in voting booths, shoe repair shops, at

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