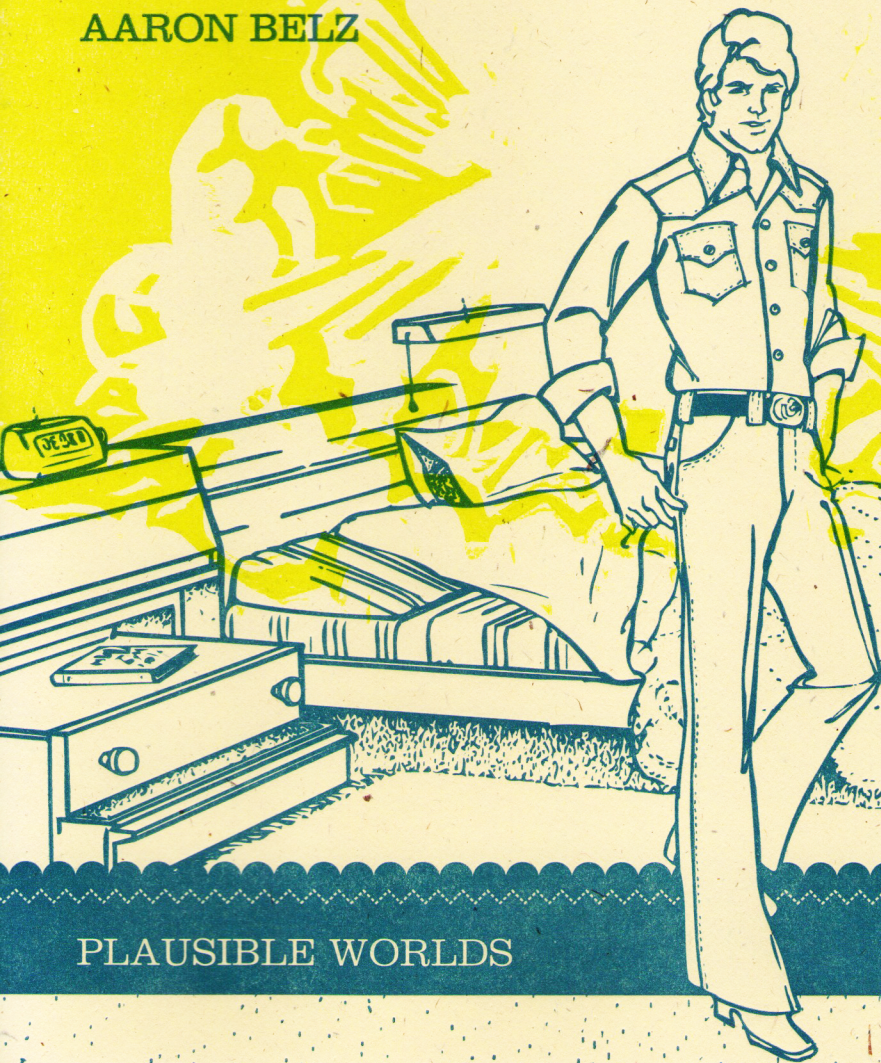


AARON BELZ



PLAUSIBLE WORLDS

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DEAR SPAM KING

I know that there's a pill
To enhance my size
And make her worship me
In bed, and I know
That I could make \$500,000
Working for myself,
And I know that hundreds
Of college girls are
Waiting for me, but listen,
I am happy being poor
And having a small penis.
I want the college girls
To do their homework
And get good jobs.
What I want from you
Is a pill that will make me
Sadder, less vigorous,
Perhaps even poorer,
But more contemplative
And a better poet. Can you
Hook me up with one of those?

POLANSKI'S PANOPTICON

Perspicuity of presentation, security,
Sex with a 13-year-old in 1977,
Symmetry, story: Manson shld be
The one doing time, not you—
For cracking that Krakovite mind:
Sharon Tate fertilizing flowers.
Mia Farrow picnicking in them.
Imagine all this in a spinning glass stadium.

Half of the West wants you dead,
You genius, son of a plastics dealer!

I LOVE STEPHEN CHOW

In this mad world
So many abrupt denunciations
Some of them over the internet
As if people didn't even exist,
I have fallen in love
With Stephen Chow
For his honesty, one,
His skill at depicting Kung Fu,
Which is timeless, two,
And three, the 17-jewel
Self-winding watch he wears
On the set and off—
Even in the shower!
God I adore “the Chow.”

GARY COOPER IN THE INTELLECTUAL GRAVEYARD

He gives himself too much space
To think. He thinks about too many
Things that aren't real. He speaks
Too effete and in arcane words
Of possible worlds, plausible
Only to the likes of Gary Cooper,
A.k.a. Frank J. Cooper, of Helena,
Who spent seven years in England
And returned to recover
From an automobile accident.
He thinks too obsessively
About what his life was and whether
It should have been lived differently—
The singing cowboy,
Asleep with all his women, thinking,
Dreaming, effecting a posture,
Punctuating his long meditations
With "Of course," "Perhaps," "It would seem,"
And "To be perfectly frank."
Gimme the bones in them boots, Gary.

2005 IS AN IMPORTANT YEAR FOR ALEC BALDWIN

Even getting him in for an interview
These days is like meeting W for coffee:
Unless you're a hotshot African ambassador
It just ain't happenin', no how, no way.

Ten years ago he named his daughter Ireland.
Fifteen years ago he fell for Kim Basinger.
Five years ago they broke up.
Thirty years ago his sister Jane was born.

Ten years from now...? In 2005 his star
Is still rising, mysteriously,
Like an Applebee's balloon over Santa Fe.
He is a confident, slightly scary man.

REINVENTING THE WHEEL

I tried to reinvent the wheel, and it was fun,
Because I did. It came out better than before,
Rounder, quicker, and with less friction.
The mistake I made was trying to reinvent you:
You came out taller and less confident,
With a shopkeeper's eye and shiny skin.
You got me back by reinventing me,
Turning me into what I had wanted to be,
A pensive, slightly overweight woman
With a knack for arcane geography.
Will we be happy as our new selves?
I ask myself as we lean back with brandies
On a moonlit night; I think we will,
I think to myself, though I'm thinking it as you,
And you're looking down on me as I would,
As if at any minute I might steal something,
But still not knowing what is in my mind—
A peninsula where it rains but never snows.
The wind picks up; we head inside.
We sleep in a place where we both reside.

LACE

Somewhere there is a place in words
Inhabited by a man described by words.
That man desires you to join him
By sharing with him your deepest words
Or even your most superficial ones,
Such as *smart* and *classy*.
You are a smart and classy woman,
Just as he is a tall and clumsy man.
Go on, he wants to know what's next.
Say them; he will type them in.
Length of the brow—the shadowless shirt—
The white and winding cord of thought
That knits into a dog this ferrous dirt—
That bays at hours and sleeps sometimes—
But after he hits return and presses shift
To start another string of you,
You're gone into the lettered drift—
Somewhere there is an act in time
That doesn't end. But you're not there.
Your words were spoken in the air.

BEHAVIORISM

I just love behaviorism.

People who don't love behaviorism are retarded!

The reason I do is because behaviorism is awesome.

It enables one to study men objectively, like rats and apes.

I enjoy Googling behaviorism on the web.

Reading about Skinner, I have my own private freak out
session.

Skinner's a freak and kicks other theorists' butts.

He's a way freaking great theorist.

I love it how we aren't responsible for our actions.

I love how behaviorists have the balls to actually
propound this.

I would love to see a criminal justice system

Built entirely on the theories of Skinner.

That would be so freaking awesome I'd almost shit my
pants.

Take that back, I *would* shit my pants.

If you had an entire criminal justice system

Built entirely on the theories of Skinner,

We would be able not only to observe men's behavior,

But to predict and control it, thereby making it

More socially acceptable! See what I mean?

That's why I just love behaviorism.

People who don't love behaviorism are total gaywads!

APES

I love the decentralized subway system.

It goes from California to Laos.

In California, there are connected windows.

In Laos you lose those, but they do have apes.

BELLS

Man, what a day.
I woke up with a jellied crab
clinging to my bone.
My coffee tasted like
poultice. Under the newspaper
was a white malice shaped
like Daphne du Maurier,
except it had no spoon
to tease out its bonnet,
and so it stayed very still.
It sort of slept there.
Unwilling to look at
the sun, I ambled out
for more ends. The only sad
thing left was a Chevy
stooped in its own sandwich.
I rubbed my eyes, wiped
a gigabyte on my shirttail,
then looked again:
This time it rose powerful,
like a wave blending buffoons.
“I love you,” I muttered,
as if to myself. “I love you
too,” I muttered back.

STELLA

A woman, eating nothing but Viet Nam,
sat in the shadow of a bushel of parsnip.
She beckoned me to explode daily.
Upon closer inspection, she graphed
moon events without any sort of lake
effect. I said, "That's what's called
the 'lake effect.'" She said, "I bought
these balls in Bali on sale." She winced.
I cleaned my watch. We urged the stars.

PUSHKIN

Beautiful man looking around
with hair like iron and the eyes of a clown,
darting across the street at the first
sign of a break in the parade of carriages,
a sheaf of political poems under your arm:
I love you and miss you after all these centuries.

I am saddest, I guess, about your scandal-torn marriage
that ended with gunplay and you falling down.
I picture the single smokey burst
and can't help but wonder why you let him shoot first.
On that frozen day, had you no intention of bringing harm
to anyone at all, you gentleman—not even young
d'Anthés?

IN BED WITH MERYL STREEP

Hard to believe your first movie
Came out in 1977—you are timeless,
Like a Dracula statue in the rain:
And now, as you rub my shoulders,
Wearing that flowered nightgown,
We hear actual rain, or is it wind,
Rushing around our Buena Vista condo.
You flip off Cheers. I know what's next.

TIM BURTON EXPLODES

Narrowly gathered zoot suit,
Extreme nose, slightly tilted,
You walked for awhile and exploded.

AN EVENING WITH AUDREY TAUTOU

She glanced at me
With huge brown eyes
And then I whiffed
What she later would explain
As a bit of rotting cabbage
In the bin, but which I knew
The moment I smelled it
Was an SBD fart.

THE TOPOGRAPHICAL AIR ASSAULT

During the topographical air assault,
I slept on the wind porch with Martha.
I mean, we slept in the same place,
not together. It was a trick-move
people learn who have been alive
for awhile. A reverse arm collapse.
A matriarchal half-spin, with coffee.
During the air assault, as I was saying,
Martha and I each ate a magazine
coated in hornet guts. Once inside
the imaginary meat tunnel, we smiled.
We knew the assault was almost over,
and that we'd made it through scathed
only by our own predilections
as in the background an electric guitar
strummed unfamiliar arpeggios.
Mine was *Best Life*, by the way.

FIVE BEGINNINGS OF JOKES

1. Why did the elk, deer, chipmunks, coyote, sea stars, orca whale, sea lions, newt, weasel, and many different kinds of birds cross the street?
2. Elk, deer, chipmunks, coyote, sea stars, an orca whale, sea lions, a newt, a weasel, and many different kinds of birds walked into a bar.
3. How many elk, deer, chipmunks, coyote, sea stars, orca whale, sea lions, newts, weasels, and many different kinds of birds does it take to change a lightbulb?
4. Elk, deer, chipmunks, coyote, sea stars, an orca whale, sea lions, a newt, a weasel, and many different kinds of birds were entering heaven, and St. Peter stopped them to ask a question.
5. What do you call elk, deer, chipmunks, coyote, sea stars, an orca whale, sea lions, a newt, a weasel, and many different kinds of birds at a party?

SOCCER

What began as a terrific scoring chance
degenerated into an obscene gesture
and forty men walking away from a rectangle.

I saw it happen in Surinam,
right after pineapple smoothies at Brant's.
But it's understandable: who wants a tie game?

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

Thank you for siphoning out
the water standing in the dip in my yard
after such a heavy rain, Lisa.

It was confusing to walk out there
with the magnolias so bushy, and flowering,
and my sneakers squishing like octopi.

NICELY

The grainy ice lies nicely, nicely,
the stinking crocuses in the glen
provoke hummingbirds to feistiness,
and me and my aunts bat piñatas, piñatas.

HERPETARIUM

James, the white obelisk, sat irked among
Pete Townsend records.

His alive knife grew almost selflessly,
Cramming herself up a vine,

But there didn't seem raucous at all, actually.
Alone in the preppy silt.

I claimed, along with Judith, a Clearasil sponge
Replica made in Chevy.

It left us each with a separate question,
Mine being, who is James?

Tastes of aluminum and mink spice interfered
With the absolute steak:

It wasn't a real herpetarium, she concluded,
Just a basket of wiggling vegetables

With small, fake mouths, and lipstick painted on
Them in the Greek style.

Cream on any headlight, the day falling,
Big shot-put headline.

THE END OF MY COMPUTER

At the end of my computer
Sits a white hermit playing invisible chess.
He alternates between playing against me
And playing against himself for the championship.
He held the title for six straight years
But then relinquished it to himself last summer.
Whenever I go to the end of my computer
The white hermit introduces himself
As though we have never met.
Next time I am bringing a cannon
To destroy him and that tiki hut he sits in
So that I can put on my Wayfarers
And go past the end of my computer.

THE END OF MY COMPUTER

At the end of my computer
Grows a daisy that looks like a girl's basketball team.
It speaks in the manner of Alan Alda,
Very familiarly, but with multiple mouths.
I was once confined to the area
Around the end of my computer
By an invisible fence.
Prior to that, I didn't even know about it.
Nowadays I own the end of my computer.
All I ask is that the girls play hard—
They chant, "When people are laughing,
They're generally not killing one another."
I smile as they begin to execute fundamentals.

TOP THIRTY DOWNLOADS

I wish I had discount software
For you to download
On this silly night.

The moon is literally eating
The windowsills
As roaches crawl up the shades.

You begin to think;
You blink.
Your glass of wine explodes.

FAMOUS PALINDROME

My girlfriend has a freaking weird name:
Eman Driewgnikaerfasahdneirflrigym.

RESTAURANT SCENE ONE

I look down at a dish of nothing,
Pick up my fork of contemplation,
And under the table you're kicking me.
You're saying, "Let's get out of here."
Instead I dig in, and after a few bites
I look up and you're gone.

RESTAURANT SCENE TWO

I hate to work. It is better to drink wine
and eat pasta, so I shall do it forever and ever.

R. SCENE THREE

Tall, indecipherable messages.
I am smarter than you are,
and yet you intimidate me.

Medium height message!
How you perplex me!

Short message full of chaos:
I beg you to release
details about your upcoming party.

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