

In The Name of The Flesh

Ernesto Sarezale

Published by William Cornelius Harris UK

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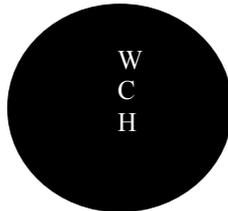
Second Chance

Supporting Mental Health in Performing Arts

ISBN 978-1-291-99548-0

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Second Chance

You may need it next

This book is the union of two overlapping sets of poems:

The first set (IN THE NAME OF THE FLESH: THE SHOW) contains all the poems that were performed by Ernesto Sarezale in his critically acclaimed one-man show “In the Name of the Flesh”, premiered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2010 – following previews at the Camden Fringe in 2008 and at the Hot August Fringe at the Royal Vauxhall Tavern in 2009. From this set, “Stolen words” was only presented at the Camden Fringe and “Life modelling” was performed at the 2008 & 2009 previews but not included in the 2010 Edinburgh show.

The second set (IN THE NAME OF THE FLESH: IN PRINT) contains poems by Ernesto Sarezale that have been published in a variety of outlets. Although not part of the show, these poems were also written “in the name of the flesh”.

PUBLICATION NOTES:

A revised version of **The Aftermath** was published in *Chroma*, Queer Literary Journal, issue 2; an audio recording of **The Street** was included in a CD anthologising live readings at Project Adorno’s spoken word night “*Taking the Mike*”; **Invisible** was featured in a blog post in thisiscabaret.com; an early version of **Workaholics** was included in *(Re)Po* tree-free magazine; **Average** appeared as a prose poem in *PISSZINE*, issue 5; **Stolen words** was published in *Rising*, issue 33; **I told you**, in literary e-zine *Velvet Mafia*, issue 19; a musical rendition of **The Fall**, sung by Ernesto Tomasini, is part of Othon Mataragas’ award winning album, *Impermanence*; **The Fool** was published in *Magma*, issue 29; **Cyclop V2.0**, in poetry e-zine *Transparent Words*, issue 4; **Mess**, **Pollution**, **Rendition** and **Velcro** appeared in *Polluto*, issue 4, as part of a short collection entitled “Velcro Hurt”; **Litany For A Gnostic Rosary** and **I Got A Spam Letter From Santa Claus** were included in *Po (trio)*.

For John xxx

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In The Name of The Flesh

Ernesto Sarezale

IN THE NAME OF THE FLESH: THE SHOW

The Aftermath

He left something behind the morning after.
I found it almost by chance. It was hidden
in the plies of soiled linen. It dropped
from the sheets as I shook them, as though
the hole from a cigarette burn had gone loose
and was aired with the hairs and the smells.
But we had not smoked the night before.
Wrinkly, stretchy, bold, ridiculous,
much bigger than I remembered it,
what now lay on the floor was his bellybutton.
That little piece of bit that I'd licked
with the tip of my tongue so many times.
So, glad I did not step on it, I picked it up,
wiped the fluff and held it with extraneous pleasure.
I stretched it to sheath my right thumb; it fitted
like a thimble of flesh. I covered it up
with a pink rubber glove and then proceeded
to do the washing. It was midday by then.
Scraps of breakfast cluttering the sink.
Sunday afternoon unfocused mind.
I imagined him sinking in the tub,
contemplating his new orifice,
wondering whether he should call back.
I put the soggy navel in one of those drawers
where one jumbles up miscellany, the likes
of foreign currency, outdated flyers,
torn rubber bands or borrowed photographs.
It looked obscenely ominous in there.
Then I waited and forgot. I heard his voice
a few days later on the answer machine.
'Do you remember me?' he said 'I think
I left something behind the morning after.
Have you spotted my leather cock ring
with stainless steel studs by any chance?'

I phoned him back, explained I had not seen the item,
but invited him to come round to my place
to have a look. I tidied up the flat.
I left his bellybutton on my bedside table.
I was eager to see him again.
When he arrived, he rushed into the bathroom.
He had to wee, he said, but the noises and moans
that I heard then suggested that he was busy
with other affairs. Was he looking for his navel
in there? Why was he running water in the bath?
He came out, all agitated and flushed,
apologetic, a stupid grin on his face.
I couldn't wait. I led him straight to the bedroom.
I displayed for him my collection of sex toys.
He didn't pay attention, of course; his eyes were stuck
to the bedside table. 'Is that a bellybutton?'
he cried. I pretended I did not understand.
I forced from him explanations, ashamed confessions.
Any excuse to have him shirtless again, really.
Embarrassed like a teenager ashamed of her period,
he showed me the blood soaked tampon he had inserted
in his belly hole and argued the stretchy bit
belonged in there. 'Are you sure, Cinderella?'
I thought. 'Let's give it a try. Does it fit?'
It drove him almost to tears. The navel,
stretched beyond recognition, and moist,
rejected his skin. It belonged to me now.
He left like he left the first time: his navel behind,
avoiding my eyes with a gloomy 'good bye'.
I didn't know whether I'd see him again,
but I was left with his navel, which fits my thumb
like a thimble of flesh. That's mine now.

The Street

Tarta della nonna. £1.95.
Merci bien, here's your change.
Would you like anything else?
Beau garçon. Mamma mia!
Isn't he cute? He's a twink!
Not South of Houston, my dear;
it's North of Thames, can't you see?
Will you serve me,...? Latte, please.
Pedro! Un café con leche,
sit, I'll bring it to your table.
No, thanks, it's to take away.
Ecstasy? Hash? Minicab?
Come on, my friend! Spare some change!
Look at that thing made of rubber;
wouldn't you like to see, mate,
my mother-in-law in it?
Look at those tits! She's a babe!
Isn't that Jonathan's boyfriend?
Who's he with tonight, the slapper?
With such an old fashioned haircut!
Flowers, boys?
Want some company tonight?
We do have a choice of girls.
Or you'd prefer a transvestite?
Do you believe in life after love?
I know, mate, so many pansies in here.
Guten Aben, Ich bin Jorg.
Nice to meet you, this is Wong,
he's a prostitute as well.
Sometimes I work as a model,
my friend is a lady boy.
Cycle faster, rain is pouring,
take me to Tottenham Court Road.
We don't get these things in Russia.
Answer your damned mobile phone!

That's cheap, aye? You can't beat it,

but beer stinks, and we have lost,...
send them homewards to think again.
There's Patisserie Valerie,
that's a good Italian there,
they play jazz around the corner,
and that's where they put the bomb.
Tortellini? Scallopini?
Feta salad? Crêpes? Paella?
Cous cous? Spring rolls? Sushi? Satay?
Beef panang? Or English breakfast?
Should we have burger from Kettner's?
Or hot dogs from the street vendor?
Excuse me, sir,
where can I find the O bar?
I'll just pop in for some condoms.
Don't forget Boyz magazine,
and get the flyers for Heaven,
it's four pounds before eleven.
Isn't that...? Oh, yes!
And that...? Yes, that's her!
Living la vida loca.
It's really packed! Mamma mia!
Wasn't it fabulous darling?
Indeed, it was a great show.
Ecstasy? Hash? Minicab?
Want some company tonight?

Invisible

I live in a street where domestic cats fly.
Without wings. They float, curling up in the air
as they purr with Cheshire's satisfaction.
Yet... queerer things happen in my neighbourhood.
Motorbikes and bikes have been seen speeding up
along my street, without riders on their seats.
(Though it often seems they are driven by cats).
And who's moving around the chairs and the beds
and the sofas and the low coffee tables
from number twelve to number six, back to twelve
and then up again to number twenty seven?
Can furniture choose the houses where they live?
How about the foot balls bouncing up and down,
on their own, at many of my street's front gardens?
What boisterous genies are pushing the sticks
on the billiard tables at my local pub?
Some people can hear mysterious shrieks,
angry female voices when Arsenal loses,
or even distorted hoarse singing that sounds
like Pink, kd lang or Wuthering Heights.
Old ladies are scared and the press is bemused.
Yet what finally caused the concern of the
local powers that be was the lewd parade
of itinerant tampons, dildoes and thongs.
Let's just say it's obvious for those in the know
that these "paranormal" phenomena
are not but the deeds of invisible... dykes.
Invisible lesbians are rife in my area
but no one can see when they kiss in the street,
or hold hands or they're playing football and pool.
So next time you see what appears to be
a motorised cat down the road, don't be fooled.
It is... an invisible dyke on a bike
driving her pet to the vet, flashing her bra.
Invisible lesbians sunbathe in the nude
at the women's pond and at public parks

for only invisible lesbians can see
invisible lesbians, their boobs and the mullets
they get at invisible lesbian hair dressers.
Yes, some of these girls can be hedonistic
and engage in inscrutable sexual acts
in the light of day, with the shutters wide open.
They dive in the muff, they play with their toys,
they sink their fangs in the necks of fair maids.
Oi, if only the local working men knew...
I know of some neighbours who have heard the rows
of invisible lipstick lesbians who move
from flat to flat, from one ex to the next,
as they carry all their IKEA with them.
Ditto about the discordant voices coming
from invisible lesbian karaoke nights.
And when you think you see sweet abandoned kids
crossing the road on their own, at their peril,
rest assured they're holding the hands of their caring
adoptive invisible lesbian mums.
Yes many queer things happen in this street.
You'll know an invisible lesbian's at play.
when suddenly tofu just fades from your plate,
or a girl's bum is pinched and no one's around,
or a cigarette's blown out of your mouth... by the wind?
And you, pretty girl, if you happen to spot
an invisible lesbian amid a big crowd,
look into yourself, you should start to wonder.
The time may have come to dump your boyfriend.

Workaholics

Let's not undress. Let's wait.
Let's kiss in our tuxedos.
Let's let the fabrics highlight
our muscles in legs and arms,
our buttocks, trim in our pants,
our pecs, shaved under our shirts.
Let's frolic and sweat in velvet.
Let's pretend our bow ties are
an extension of our strokes.

Let's not undress. Let's sweat.

Now that the crowd is gone,
and we're alone at last,
let's explore each other's smile.
Our faces flushed, our muscles clenched.
No need to shout it. No need to hurry.
We have proof of our desire
when we rub zipped fly against zipped fly.

Let's kiss as though we'd never kissed before.

The party's over, the lights are off,
the cameramen are gone,
no microphone can't capture
our loud moaning.
There are no spectators.
It's all for our eyes only.
And we can wait. We know.

Let's wait until tomorrow.
We know because we did
perform our duties well
this morning when we met
at work for the first time.

We know how big our cocks are.
We know our firm nipples match,
we know our arse holes can accommodate
because we've already sucked each other
and fucked each other
and come over each other's chest,
arses shot from awkward angles,
cum shots taken from below
and above, from the side, ...
close-ups of our shaven balls.
It was an anodyne plot.

Let's not undress now.

We saw it at first sight,
before we took our clothes off.
Something they never saw.
They won't see it tomorrow.
We are professionals, you know.
But when the scene is over,
our uniforms ripped off,
each other's semen mixed
with sweat and grease,
we'll share a kiss
if no one's peeking in the showers.

Let's sweat. Let's kiss. Let's wait.

We must behave tomorrow.
And we'll not need a fluffer,
that's for sure.
Whatever happens now,
we know that we'll perform.
And we'll pretend that we pretend
when we appear lustful on the set.
Let's not undress. Let's wait.

Product Details

ISBN 9781291995480

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Edition first edition

Publisher William Cornelius Harris

Published 24 October 2014

Language English

Pages 40

Binding Perfect-bound Paperback

Interior Ink Black & white

Weight 0.11 kg

Dimensions (centimetres) 14.81 wide x 20.98 tall