

International Edition

THIS
ISSUE:

A black and white photograph of two hippos standing on a wooden deck. One hippo is in the foreground, facing right, and the other is slightly behind it, also facing right. The word "BEASTS" is written in large, bold, white letters with a black outline across the bottom of the image.

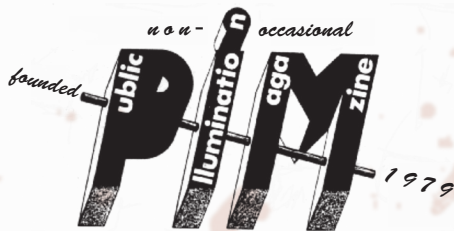
BEASTS

Nº. 65

Late 2021

P U B L I C
ILLUMINATION
m a g a z i n e

\$1.⁹⁹



Number Sixty-five Late 2021
 Published at: Casa Sorci, 06044 Castel Ritaldi (PG),
 Italy. E-mail: casasorci@tiscali.it
 © 2021 by Public Illumination Magazine
 Editor: Zagreus Bowery
 Staff: Miss Davenport, Mister Cologne
 Printing: Mr. Gibbon & Family
 Thanks to: Web Continuum
Online Archive: www.mondorondo.com/pim

Page 4: Broken..... by Stew
 4: Blind Rage..... by Sophie D. Lux
 4: The Wild..... by Wasabi Green
 5: La Venganza..... by Jörga Cardin
 6: Baldknobber..... by Cognoscenti
 7: Pigs love Pigs..... by Sparrow
 7: Beauty and the Beast..... by Rank Cologne
 7: WRM PTO SLD..... by Mik Top
 7: My Father..... by Bernie Gunther
 8: The Other Other..... by bp ummm
 9: Turtle..... by Hank Artaud
 10: Sogni d'oro..... by Giova
 11: Agony Column..... by Dillon Cakebread
 11: Thursday..... by Sparrow
 11: Security..... by Phil Redondo

11: Letranger..... by Art K
 11: Hundreds of Cows..... by The Decatur Kid
 11: Palimony Palomino..... by Sparrow
 11: Both Sides..... by Matt Flammhaff
 12: East West..... by We
 14: Beast of Soho..... by Buffy Porker
 16: Model Beast..... by Jada Fab
 17: Melancholy Man..... by Giacomo
 17: Kafka's Brain..... by the New Man
 18: Chelsea Wilds..... by Sleepless in NYC
 18: The Unthinkable... by HRH The King of France
 19: fido..... by daisy
 20: Milo of Cortona..... by Leadbilly
 21: Dreams & Beasts..... by My Canti
 22: The Devil's Toothbrush..... by U. Bett
 22: In Patchogue..... by Jackson Scrubber
 22: If..... by Pat
 23: My Beast..... by Uncle Mac

Public Illumination Magazine requires your contributions for its pages! Send words (max 275, prose preferred) and pictures on next issue's theme (with obligatory pseudonym) to the editor (by airmail or e-mail), *quickly!*

Public Illumination Magazine is (or was recently) available at the following shops:

In New York: Bluestockings, Printed Matter, Spoonbill & Sugartown Books, Unoppressive Non-Imperialist Bargain Books, Unnameable Books
In San Francisco: City Lights Bookstore
In Seattle: Confound Books
In Paris: Shakespeare & Co.
On Line: www.printedmatter.org
And More Eventually.

BROKEN

The world breaks everyone and afterward many buy Gorilla Glue.

Blind Rage

I take the dog for a walk as soon as I get out of bed, it's a good way to wake up and we both enjoy it. Over the summer, our walks get longer and longer, starting earlier and earlier. But then hunting season starts and I don't trust the hunters not to mistake us for wildlife so we barely get outside before turning back most days. One year, our then dog came home foaming at the mouth: we rushed her to the vet but she didn't make it. Hunters had left poisoned meatballs near the house, theoretically to kill off local

predators like foxes before they released their cage-bred pheasants to breed and fatten for the next hunting season. I went berserk and ripped apart every hunting blind that I could find, smashing them with my fists and trampling them underfoot; it felt awfully invigorating...

THE WILD

Animal tracks in snow—
footloose paw prints—
go across my path,
and vanish into the woods.

Every time I walk outside,
I see this disregard
for human engineering.

These creatures don't care
about surveying,
bulldozing or plowing.
I stick to the tracks
made by boots, tires
and cross-country skis.
I deviate only
when I walk into the trees
to pee.



LA CUISINE DE LA DOULEUR



PIGS LOVE PIGS

Pigs love
other pigs.

Rarely do they feel
affection for a chicken.

Beauty and the Beast

"You beast!" she yells at
me from her perch
on the toilet seat as I lean
against the bathroom
door,
smiling as I watch her.
"Get the *fuck* out of here!"

Later, she snaps a leash
onto the collar
around my neck, and we
leave the house.

I'm still smiling as I
search for a fire hydrant
to pee on.

WRM PTO SLD

1 1/2 lbs pto, ckd
1/4 c. mayo
1 1/2 tbsp. djn. mstd.
2 tsp. wht wne
1/2 tsp. slt.
1/2 tsp. ppr.
1/2 tsp. wrch. sce.
1/4 c. clry
3 c. thinly sliced clay
1 c. mncd prly
2 hd. bld eggs

PL CHP PTO. AD MAYO,
WN, SLT, PPR, MSTD,
WRCH SCE. AD RD ONN,
CLRY, PTO, HD. BLD.
EGS. MX TIL BLOD. KP
CHLD.

SVS. SX.

MY FATHER

My father sold
wikipedias door
to door.

THE OTHER OTHER

Girls never got called “beast.” This was reserved for guys at school with facial hair at age 12, an odd gaze reminding you of a cluster bomb, shoe heels unevenly worn, plowing into the lunchline uttering voodoo, ashes from Ted’s torched mattress smeared across his forehead. Watch the schoolkids scatter. Camraderie around Ted was always asymmetrical, fraught with a disquiet that was not wholly groundless. His ex-Army sergeant father pushed sticks into the front lawn, kite string taut from stick to stick, bordering the sidewalk – the boundary of freedom’s end. Cross it and be grounded for weeks. We played in the street, in the rest of the world, as Ted beat a dodgeball with a stick over and over and over. You wanted his mad dicta-

tor outbursts to be an act he’d eventually come down from. But he never came down because it was no act. Medication made his sweat sour. He couldn’t pay attention in class.

Instead he drew Big Daddy Roth-like cartoons on his arms, his desk, in school books. Drew fathers falling from planes, dogs that didn’t look like dogs, fanged buxom women with daggers shooting from their eyes, casting shadows over drag racing men, crouched in delicate, rocket-shaped vehicles, emblazoned with Biblical lines like: “Children of God in the Mist of Crooked & Twisted Generations.”

He drew me too, rendered in a few scratchy lines – skinny daddy long legs up to my chin, walking in through an open door. In the story’s last panel he’s erasing his father’s face. We’re laughing so hard our eyes are falling out.





AGONY COLUMN

I stutter badly. Should I tell my fiancé?

Thursday

I awoken
to a crow's
cruel laughs.

SECURITY

Tried to fill a briefcase with unlimited breadsticks at Olive Garden and they called security.

L'stranger

My mother always told me never talk to strangers. I growled: mother dear, if I cannot talk to strangers I cannot talk to myself for

nobody - NOBODY is stranger than me.

Hundreds of cows

standing together in the herd,
penned in in Kansas waiting patiently to be slaughtered
under a perfectly blue sky.

PALIMONY PALOMINO

The court decided my ex-lover gets the palomino.

BOTH SIDES

Both sides of the river are the other side.

IN WEST,
INVEST.

IN EAST,
BEAST.



INVEST IN
BEAST,
MAKE
WEST FROM
EAST.



BEAST OF SOHO

One night after we'd smoked a joint, getting all honest and vulnerable, his claws retracted, he said my suspicion about him fucking an art school classmate (Berthegart, a creepy little monkey thing) was well founded. More than shock or rage I was insulted by his choice of someone so below my paygrade. To make matters worse, he said he went down on her five times and had multiple orgasms. But I took it in stride because honesty. Because love. Now it was my turn. He said he'd always thought I'd fucked the director of the theater company I'd been in for a year. I mistakenly believed it was now my turn to balance the scales. I confessed, steeped in this deeper intimacy, this glow of full disclosure: "I did." Within seconds he was on

me, throwing his whole body behind his blows, bared teeth jutting from swollen red gums, his eyes green and glazed. My arms failed to defend my body, struggling to reconcile the warm embrace of the moment before with the present fear of imminent death.

I lived, though plum colored rorschachs painted my face and arms and the roots of my hair were on fire. We didn't see friends, and certainly no one's parents for a couple of weeks. He was always very sorry afterward, curled up in the corner, his lurid flush faded to a green pallor, chalky lips. At twenty-five I learned two crucial things: First, it's bullshit that stoned people aren't capable of violence. Second, revenge is not always sweet. But I stayed. Because love. Time transforms. A child was born. His shapeshifting retracted. A bad temper made little quakes but the earth held its ground,

and this new uncomplicated mother love: a garden of wild flowers and sunshine. Curiosity returned, full of the world, doubtless love.

He began going to gallery openings by himself, attended social events without me, inviting my best friend in my place. He enjoyed a steady supply of adoring males and females, gay and straight. Bad temper was tamed by indifference. He stopped speaking to me. For months, even when people came over, he never addressed me, didn't once look at me. I began to dissolve. But I stayed. Because love.

When was it enough? It's hard to pinpoint. The turning point appeared at a Castelli opening: free champagne, good lighting, a dark-haired man with pale skin.

We were in bed, lights out, eyes closed, not yet asleep. He slinked out of bed and walked over to the chair where I'd left my note-

book. He picked it up.

I jumped out of bed and began grabbing at it, and finally wrested it from his hands.

Later in the night, while I pretended to sleep, he made it back to the chair, took hold of the notebook and read it—a couple of flimsily veiled poems. It wasn't hard to figure out they weren't about him. Consumed by a slaving rage, he began his attack. The hairs on his back rose like bayonets, knuckles straining against the cracking surface of his skin. I ran to the exit door at the other end of the loft, my ghost hands reaching to turn the heavy police lock. He moved with unearthly speed, grabbed my hair and beat a murderous rhythm into the brick wall with my head. Our eight year old, alone in the bath was within earshot.

After a few hours, maybe a day later, he said he loved me.

I changed the locks.



THE HAPPINESS OF A MELANCHOLY MAN

The happiness of a melancholy man is a beautiful thing to see. He's in Piazza Della Rotunda at 10 am and school kids in red caps are already streaming in and out of the Pantheon and two old men are strolling in November sunlight with their hands clasped behind their backs and a young artist, bearded, looks up again and again, with such seriousness, at the fountain he is drawing. And the woman who works at the cafe in #67 stands in her black hair and white blouse, face up to the sun, eyes closed, cigarette in hand while the melancholy man leans against the marble of the fountain, listening to the water and the sound of the neighing horse nearby who stamps his feet, waiting impatiently for the



day's first tourists to claim his carriage. When the bells of 10:15 am begin to ring, if you look closely at the melancholy man, you will see a small smile on his face when he looks up just in time to see the little girl in the pink coat run up to the horse and stand there stark still, staring: a small creature paying homage to a large one.

CHELSEA WILDS

The visitor doesn't move like the orange butterfly that followed me on Arthur Avenue one sunny Bronx day.

He doesn't sleep deeply on twig mattresses like Italian brown bears in Abruzzo's national park.

My new neighbor is a stranger to restraint. On the night he arrived, I awoke to his roar filling my rooms.

He doesn't tread softly. Barefoot, he stomps like an elephant, demanding validation and slaughtering my peace.

Pandemic days make an escape risky, so I work from the office, turn the TV volume high to muffle disruptive sounds.

Before bed, I stuff my ears with plugs, pray he sheds his skin, and fast transforms from a baboon into a goldfish.

They evicted him, but he won't leave.

THE UNTHINKABLE

After they pluck out your fingertips
And toenails with a pair of pliers,
And smash your toes and fingers
With mallets,
And singe your eyebrows
With acetylene torches,
Teasing you until they pluck
Out your eyebrows
With demitasse spoons,
And cut off your dick
With a hand saw,
And leave your balls
To the rats,
One of the nicer ones,
If you can imagine
a comparative
Of nice among
these beasts,
Says, "Life is unfair."





DREAMS & BEASTS



CROCODILE

I walk around a tree carrying my bike by hands, lost in thought. I keep walking around the tree and after a while, I look at the bike and see that it has turned into a crocodile.



TURTLES

Bella, Mary and I are in our favorite bookshop. Bella needs to do something and asks us if we could take care of her turtle for a while. The weird thing about the tur-

tle is that she's a fast turtle and runs so fast that you can't keep up with her. Bella tells us she's the only fast turtle in the whole world. When she bought her, no one told her that. Mary and I try not to let her escape.



DOGS

My sister and her boyfriend have a new dog; they are worried that she does not want to play. My mother asks: "Did you spit smoke on the dog's face, by any chance? Did you know that if you do that, the dog loses the impulse to play?". While she's talking, I realize I know they did.



THE DEVIL'S TOOTHBRUSH

IN PATCHOGUE

Always when walking along Grove Avenue toward the bay he could not help but remember the double-backed beast that was once upon a time created in the woods... a beast with a very brief lifespan. O, dear Melinda, he would sigh! Only memory as an audience.

IF

If I had a lot of money I'd buy a mink coat and nylon stockings. Or a bespoke men's suit. I can't decide.

My Beast

My beast comes near. My no-name creature.

It's ugly and fat and needs all five of its feet to make its way down to the river where it likes to sit all day under the cottonwoods. My beast is often unkind. Needless to say, he is stupid. He wants me to understand he can't help himself. If my beast had words he would say: this is just the way it is. His face is all wrinkles and frowns. I bring him the lilac licorice he loves. That much at least I can do for him. Sometimes he sighs, my beast. Sometimes he moans. Sometimes there is a kind of humming: like the sound tracks make when you put your ear to them: a train is rushing toward you, a long train. Who knows what's inside it. Very soon it will arrive.

coming soon:



next issue's theme:

SEX