

TAKE
THIS
STALLION

POEMS

AN
DUPLAN

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FIRST HOT BADASS EDITION

To David

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△ said to □, “Did I hit an animal back there?”

□ said, “No, don’t look back.”

ON A SCALE OF 1-10, HOW “LOVING” DO YOU FEEL?

I don't love Yeezus as much as I love
Yeezus when I'm with you. And rappers
get lonely too. Zip-lining is not
a cure-all. Kim knows that
and knows how to backwards-
straddle a bike like a real woman's woman.

I never got the message you sent me.
Where is the message you sent me.
Did you send me a message. Please.

I bet Kim knows how to:

climb trees
shoplift
speak Mandarin
speak that language everyone's always talking about, the one
they are going to put on the spaceship or already have

For the aliens. So they know.

Can't believe it took so long for the waterproof phone.
Now no more excuses about I was at a party
I dropped it in the toilet
so drunk. Where is the message.

I bet Kim:

does Kegel exercises, knows Dr. Kegel, met him at
a conference in LA

I bet Kim:

knows who Molly is, knows the girl the drug's named after,
knows her, knows the girl

I'm Andre 3000. I'm outtie 3000. I'm out of my element. I'm out of
cigarettes. I quit four months ago, it was never serious but every time
I tried to quit you'd call with something to say and that one time I tried
to quit and David died.

Benji at the funeral: This is so sci-fi.

I bet Kim has:

arm implants
leg implants
heart implants
soul implants

But they're all natural no chemicals.

A sage once told me: Your opposite is the Cock. Avoid Tigers. Seek a
Dragon or a Rat.

That sage got greasy real quick.

I bet Kim:

knows General Tso, slept with him, before Yeezy

Heard Drizzy mention Paris and it blew my mind. Did not know she
was still alive. All these years mourning.

I bet Kim:

knows TMZ, had a drink with him, introduced him
to Molly

They're getting married next spring.

I wonder if Kim will introduce me to the love of my life. Where the
fuck is the message.

Yogi tea-tag: Love has no boundary.

No. No, I'm afraid not.

Those poets think they are so cool because they know
the world is dying. They say Anthropocene,
Anthropocene. Anthropocene like it's candy.

The Cock and I actually get along quite fine.

Atom, atma, atmosphere
collapsing
right over our heads.
The carbons
killing us softly.

I bet Kim:

rips at least twenty mics
on the daily

That's a fair estimate.
Not while Yeezy's home.

There is so much you don't know
about me. I once met an Australian,
told him he could have my underwear.
He didn't want it. I'm better
when I'm mysterious.
I'm better when I've had a few
days to forget
how much I want you
to want me like you want Kim.

Tell TMZ I said that. Tell him right now. Leave him a message.

How could your mailbox be full, it's made of stardust. #tbt: Once saw
kid goats playing. Remembered why I was alive. Have since forgotten.
Something about animals smiling. They can't do it but I swear to god
they're doing it.

How many days was Yeezus on the cross?

I bet Kim:

stays cool under pressure, can deactivate
a bomb faster than it takes Godzilla
to kill the mantises

Where was the sex scene.

I'm not opaque. I'm so relevant I'm disappearing.

Look for me with your hands
don't use the computer I hate
your screensaver when we're having sex.
Who has screensavers anymore.

I bet Kim:

never kids herself, knows
when Yeezy isn't coming home

Nicki: And get a dick pic and then you press send / And send a red heart and send a kissy face.

Our friend Bobby Frost: Something about free verse. Tennis with the net down.

I bet Kim:

is a great doubles partner

Me and Bobby would've been inseparable. Probably not tho. Probably 75% match, 63% friend, 9% enemy. Take yr chances.

Here's something I've always wondered about Siamese twins:
everything.

Sometimes silence means
I love you sometimes
it means my phone is in the toilet.
How do I know which is which.

Show me the meaning of being lonely.
Is this the feeling.

Can't tell left from right
without singing that song,
the one about the loser.

We know so much more
about bullying now.

When we are all stardust, we will say the media distorts
the public's perception of cosmic bodies.

Where is Oprah in twenty years. Will she have her own
planet? How did she meet all those doctors and why
don't the doctors on TV ever talk about
real diseases like gout and bladder
infections and I can't sleep on my back
because I'll drown in my sleep.

You never shake me awake
when I'm suffocating. Be a pal.

It's ok, it's not so bad. It is so bad, but it's ok.

Mirka in the margins: We can work with it.

I meditated so hard I lost track of my self.

WANTED: new self, must be beautiful
 must be a real woman's woman (cf. Kimberly Kardashian)
 must be implacable
 must have heart as black as gangrene
 must have sharp nails
 must know the names of things

Re: those poets: So what Anthropocene.
What about the children, have you forgotten about the children.

My therapist is a beautiful man. I can say that.
It makes me post-shame.

John in the car: Something about gender and post-humanity.

I will always be a woman.
Even when I'm dead and made of stardust and then
even when I'm made of god dark god, I will still be
a woman just like Kim.

In two months, this poem is obsolete. VWLS R BSLT. "This poem."

All of Hannah's poems are about masturbation and she likes
my poems and that's how I know
I'm gonna be ok.

Bumper sticker: Musicians Duet Better Question: Is it a sex joke.

License plate: KITTY Same question.

License plate: CHOSEN

Yes, I am wheezy, but no, I'm not asthmatic.

I never lost respect for Martha. Getting arrested
is a rite of passage. That's why Canada
won't apologize for JB. Consider this:

Baby, baby, baby. / Ooh, said JB.

We lay nocturnal. / Speculate what we feel, said the other one.

I feel good. / I knew that I would, said the first JB,
the one before all the others.

Three things that make me a woman: Martha, *Cosmo*, Martha's pancake recipe.

Sex position of the day:

Face each other. Do not break eye contact. Even as the water rises up over your heads. Even as the hypothermia. Even as the stardust.

Right now, do you like the drug's effect?

Right now, do you want more of the drug?

On a scale of 1-10, how "loving" do you feel?

Do you love me, do you
love me. Now that I can dance
with my eyes closed now that
I can ride on top no hands
now that my touch is so subtle
it makes you lose control now that
the blood the blood leaving our
bodies now that the corpses
are fully drained now that
the blue the blue feeling the one
with all the sharp edges / do you.

If I could meet with Martha, I would say this and first of all I would not call her Martha to her porcelain face. I would say Miss Stewart, how you've touched me. I owe my whole life to you, even these hands these broken hands I owe to you. Would that I were in your shackles.

Insha'Allah.

We don't say that part but really it should go:

Hello, how are you, god willing.

Hi, I'm well, how are you, god willing.

I'm alright. Fred lost his job god willing

but we won't give up hope god willing.
I just pray he can stay god willing sober this time.

I bet Kim:

knows who Fred is, met him at Pacha
did lines in the men's bathroom
with Fred god willing.

I don't do hard drugs but occasionally
occasionally I do hard drugs but I don't
occasionally I like to put the fear of death in me
like to go a little too far
swallow a piece of glass, stand too close
to the microwave.

Balloons won't pop if exposed to direct sunlight but it's taken years
to learn that. All those years hiding my balloons in the shade.

Euphemism: Hiding my balloons in the shade.

Something about orgasms or birthday parties.

Used to have recurring dream about demented carnival.
Ring around the rosie. Children with eyes too big.
The animals up and down in a circle, the skewered animals.
The parents standing beside their children on the skewered animals.

At the circus: The elephants, the aerialists. Imagine: a troupe
of aerialists called The Areolas. All different
kinds, some wide and pink. Some bumpy.
Some dark like rotting.

I don't do drugs but occasionally.

I promised myself I would never say "This poem" but now look where we are, this sea, this sea of masturbation. Imagine: a troupe of robotic porn stars. They form a union. In the future, when the stardust, we will debate the rights of robotic sex workers, will debate whether we are good people.

Sam at the gorge: I want to start an escort service when I grow up.

One way to tell if you are a good person: [blank field]

One way to tell if you are a bad person: Nothing makes you cry anymore not even the fact that nothing makes you cry.

Josh at the restaurant: Present shock.

Josh at the next restaurant: Present shock.

I like when you repeat yourself, it makes me feel like a broken machine.

Would you like fries with your wine. Would you like wine with your sex. How well do you think you could predict the next earthquake, any earthquake. How much do you think this movie cost to make. Factor in the burning helicopters, the dead Juliette Binoche, that quick reference to Mothra, did you catch it, I say \$75 million and on a scale of 1-10, I'm at 3 for "loving" and 9 for "hungry."

Feed me in bed. You know that's all I've ever wanted, Martha.

Are we still worried about apathy.

Mirka in the margins: POV?

When I smiled at that crowd of men,
I did not realize what it meant.

Remember when you drove by me and pretended
you'd never met me and then it happened again
at the stoplight and I got in the car and screamed at you
and got back out and remember?

John at the restaurant: You better order something or you'll embarrass me.

Mother on the couch: Don't fuck it up by being yourself.

Josh in the garden: Where should we plant the tansy?

Plant it here. In my eyes. I want to see flowers forever.
Flower highways. Flower Netflix. Flower plane tickets
to somewhere that's too far to remember
what you look like.

I'll never tell my therapist I love him.
That makes me post-post-shame.

Man in clothing shop: Lemme tell you watcha lookin' at. We got spring,
post-spring, summer.

Father in kitchen: What are you doing in my house?

Are we still worried about apathy.

John at the funeral: Everything vanishes.

I was mad because he was so good. He was better
than anyone else. I would've given him my heart
if I'd known his was going to stop.
What do I need it for.

Yogi tea-tag: Use your head to live with your heart.

No. No, I'm afraid not.

The answer is GMOs. That's what *National Geographic* says.
The third world countries.

Kim:

met GMO outside the apartment while Yeezy
was asleep, they smoked cigarettes, blew smoke
into each other's mouths

"Women's work": N/A.

I love it when they call a man hysterical, like they forgot,
forgot that's women's work.

On a scale of 1-10, I'm at
6 for "angry" and 10 for "bad person."

I've always liked the Christian Science Reading Rooms. Here are some
proposals:

The Areolas Reading Room (picture books)
The What to Do When You Love an Alcoholic Reading Room

Enough of that. Here's to harvest moons
 Here's to when you held my hand at Doris
 Here's to Jasper the cat
 Here's to white-on-white paintings
 Here's to government kitsch

I wish that Dan Beachy-Quick would write one of those drone poems about me. Something about how I never stop, can't stop, won't.

Not all my friends are dead. Only four.

Someone somewhere: It's not death I'm afraid of. It's the getting dead.

That's the fun part, tho, I think. You only die once.

Some ladies are scared to talk about birds and flowers,
but I'm not. Trust me, I know what that look means
but I'm more of a man than you'll ever be.

Augie in the studio: Don't get cocky.

I'm always cocky. I have an erection. It's for you / and you and you.

Mike in the front yard: She's a keeper.

Miss Minaj: Bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch, bitch.

Remember when you first learned it meant a female dog.
The exhilaration.

I've always liked Robert Motherwell. His last name.
Well mother, I suppose I'll be going now.
We've done all we could.

Kendrick Lamar: Pray my dick get big as the Eiffel Tower / so I can fuck the world for seventy-two hours.

God willing. He meant to say god willing.

He has already been to rehab so many times.
Just keep him here, don't send him away anymore.

White people like to ask me about my hair.
They say did you get a haircut. I say no
it's the shrinkage. "White people."

Don't be so pessimistic.
Don't be so sensitive.
Don't go so slow do it faster
nevermind let me do it flip over.

I read an article about how violent
black people are. Black is not
an eye-color, no one has black eyes,
but it's an option you can choose
at the DMV, anyone can choose it. "Black people."

When I want to learn about being black, I look at the bottom
of ponds, where the trash collects and where the fish
with those sucking mouths live.

Just suck it be careful no teeth.

Eva on the couch: Vanilla just happens to be my favorite flavor.

Ithaca is the home of the ice-cream sundae.
Troy is the home of Uncle Sam. America

is the home of the brave
souls who go on beating themselves
over the back with talk of
the death of the dream.

When my therapist dies, no one else will be nearly as interested
in my dreams. I think about that.

Mother on the phone: Just cut him out. Just cut him off.

Enough of that. Here's to Martha Stewart, she's the reason
John loved me. Something about
a man his stomach, his heart.

The recession: Think: hairlines, the tide, our capacity for empathy.

POV? POV??

Plenty of Valium. To get us through. The interment.

Remember the cookies at the reception. Thank god willing
for white chocolate chip macadamia.

Why do you go on tours of cemeteries.
The dead people are not fun. Fun is key.
For example, blackout drunk, don't remember. It's like
sleeping but you're facedown in the corner
and the chicken finger vomit and I think
the nurse's name was Jenny.

Mike in the bedroom: There's nothing in this picture frame.

There's nothing in the frame
of this instant except
my hand touching your shoulder
but it won't stay.
Your body is so hard now.
They put on too much of the balm.
You've never looked so womanly
as you do dead now, dead the next day, etc.

When the stardust we will understand.

When the stardust the hypothermia will not hurt us.

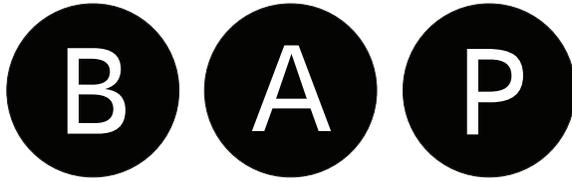
When the stardust the blood the blood of the stars runs down your leg.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

AN DUPLAN is a trans* poet, curator, and artist. He is the author of a book of essays, *Blackspace: On the Poetics of an Afrofuture* (Black Ocean, 2020), a full-length poetry collection, *Take This Stallion* (Brooklyn Arts Press, 2016), and a chapbook, *Mount Carmel and the Blood of Parnassus* (Monster House Press, 2017). He has taught poetry at the University of Iowa, Columbia University, Sarah Lawrence College, and St. Joseph's College.

His video works have been exhibited by Flux Factory, Daata Editions, the 13th Baltic Triennial in Lithuania, Mathew Gallery, NeueHouse, the Paseo Project, and will be exhibited at the Institute of Contemporary Art in L.A in 2021.

As an independent curator, he has facilitated curatorial projects in Chicago, Boston, Santa Fe, and Reykjavík. He was a 2017-2019 joint Public Programs fellow at the Museum of Modern Art and the Studio Museum in Harlem. In 2016, he founded the Center for Afrofuturist Studies, an artist residency program for artists of color, based at Iowa City's artist-run organization Public Space One. He works as Program Manager at Recess.



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