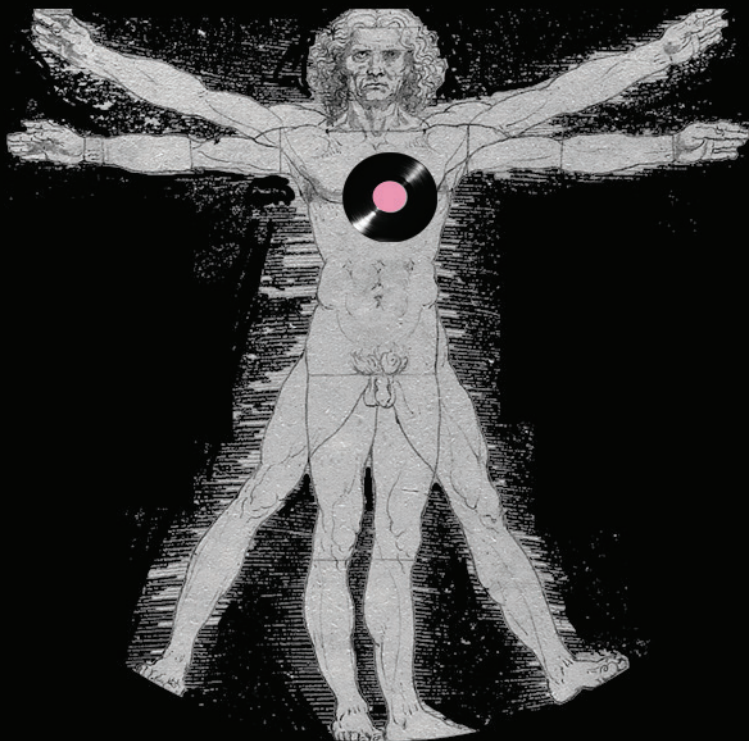


THE TINY JUKEBOX

Nate Slawson



THE TINY JUKEBOX

by Nate Slawson



H_NGM_N BOOKS, 2009

The Tiny Jukebox

© Nate Slawson, 2009

a H_NGM_N portable document format chapbook

Much love & gratitude to my friends who gave their time & affection,
especially Ada Limón, Adam Clay, Alex Lemon, Carrie Olivia Adams,
Karyna McGlynn, Matt Hart, Matt Henriksen, & Philip Jenks.

Special thanks to the raddest editor-astronaut, Nate Pritts.

for Andrea & Alex

CONTENTS

SIDE A

you are paul newman	1
you are 100,000 fireflies (superchunk cover version)	2
you are black sabbath	3
you are saxophone	4
you are <i>blow up</i> (m. antonioni, 1964)	5
you are amplifier	6
you are delicious	7
you are a planetarium	8
you are a brief meditation on a short story	9

SIDE B

my ska band will be named zoey deschanel

[you so cherry bomb]	10
[you bubblicious sucker punch]	11
[in my front pocket is a note]	12
[you so fist-in-the-throat]	13
[you dance snow machine &]	14
[I like to think you a power chord]	15
[you red vinyl lp]	16

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	17
-----------------	----

you are paul newman

I be yr horse
to whip & to
hold, not corpse,
not busted ankle
bone, & down
my throat you
can plug every
dime every
quarter, so I be
yr parking meter
& you be my
pipe cutting tool.

you are 100,000 fireflies (superchunk cover version)

body is also con-
fession, yr bruise
a flashlight map
of north carolina,
an injured bird, &
I say hello, bird,
I don't know yr
name or if you
rooftop crucifix
or if we just sad.
I listen with my
lungs, with my
one good ear.
yr wings is no
electric guitar,
& I is fuckt night,
no voice, no body,
no mouth of glass.

you are black sabbath

bite my face
& I be yr dove
for all time.

you are saxophone

is not yr soul
a tiny jukebox,
a pain in yr heart
sprung from the
blues, & which,
when I cup my
hand to yr chest,
be like thunder-
ous rain, like
wasps in a coffee
can, & thou
nettles & dry river-
bed, thou sermon
of fire, sister, &
we hymnal of
matchsticks.

you are *blowup* (m. antonioni, 1966)

give me darkness
or give me *been*
drowned in the creek
behind yr house.
I do repent for
my face hammered
against yr car window,
for the H-bomb in
my head & for every
morning in the bathroom
I knelt down to pray
car wreck, knelt down
& sd *razorblade*, bawling like
I was fucking oil slick.
I cannot answer for
yr skin when there
is no "we" in the slow
slow sorrow of
polaroids, of hand-
holding dance party.
& I want bad to be
forgiven, to be shepherd,
projectionist &/or light-
house keeper. but not me.
not a thing like me & w/
fish for eyes, them that be
the color of underwater.

you are amplifier

I hope this don't
sound nothing like
a prison love letter,
but I wanna play
w/ yr microphone,
sing *something else by*
the kinks from begin-
ning to end into yr
red red knees & when
I'm finished I be
yr fuckin bass drum
& you can kick out
the side of my head,
then cradle me baby
rabbit-like, all jackie o
how goddamn sweet
is that how killer
would that be?

you are delicious

please forgive me
but do you know
I wanna bite into
yr yellow jacket
& by *bite* I mean
tear a gash in yr
belly, that flesh-
iest of flesh, I bet
you taste like
lemonade, so
sour & so pink.

you are a planetarium

I do & I don't
feel bad for scaring
you sometimes,
eventhough I'm not
pack of wild dogs scary
& eventhough I'm not
stuck in a subway
tunnel scary, but I'm
more all around you
scary, yr shadow &
footstep echo &
those helicopter
things that fall
from trees down
the back of yr shirt
scary. I'm not
meaning ghosts
& shit, more like
murmured light,
murmured sound,
& my hands feel
like magnolia skin.
yr neck salt-
water birdbath,
a boxlight diarama
of stars & comets
& the bluest blue
nothing of outer
space.

you are a brief meditation on a short story

yes I am a little
drunk & am gonna
try finding my way
home by swimming
laps in yr swimming pool,
can't imagine there's
anything more black-
berry bramble than
yr eyelashes, yr black
t-shirt, what we fall into
when we notice something
too closely. & this
takes me back to
cincinnati, to kentucky,
to oklahoma, & every
other place I been
where I'm currently
not, every place its
own film reel, empty
swimming pools &
empty houses & I
butterfly stroke for
you in the worst way.

my ska band will be named zooey deschanel

*The World shall burn //
to compass all*

—Ronald Johnson

you so cherry bomb

& hello nighttime ghetto fire
in the back alley of my skull

hello asphalt & cheeks filled with gasoline
I swallow you like paint

hello nighttime vertigo
the beat in my head
is freight trains, is scripture &

you bible I say
you the most
beautiful goddamn
& a jukebox of the pinkest pinkest pills
I ever seen

you bubblicious sucker punch
you best-part-of-what's splintering
my eye socket bone

I be sketchbook
I be the architect of sweet talk & x-rated whispering
the blueprint of yr ribcage &

all the ways a dirty movie
could undress you

I wanna bleed technicolor
I want yr basement to whirl switchblade
& switchblade & fucking switchblade
if we hold our breath long enough

in my front pocket is a note
it says I would try anything once

I would swallow a jar of pennies
I would take off all my clothes
& lie down in yr front yard
w/ a pair of pliers

would be a ladder at yr window,
yr fire truck, cadmium red,
yr pantone 192

& if you ask I be an airplane
in midair bursting into flames

you so fist-in-the-throat
yr words is hard candy

my chest is boombox
8 D-batteries blasting *Dirty*
all up & down yr street

I play yr Jason Lee &
you is handycam, elbow scars 2 & 3,
my broken tooth, my sugar cane

& I long to be yr factory
of daughters of daughters &
wowee & hot hot skin,
like summer blacktop
glow at the core of you

you dance snow machine &
light tower & electric hum

& when I wave my hand
in front of my face
I see meteor rain
I become the carpet
rolled inside my chest

& I like the way
the razorblade feels
underneath my chin

so how much valium
should I take before it
means I love you pin-up,
before you say once &
for all I'm yr hospital bed

because I have the hardest
time remembering,
remembering shit like
how my eyes is supposed to feel

I like to think you a power chord
& I'm the entire history of FM radio

one day we will make a movie
w/ conmen & private detectives
& you just like Anna Karina
& we will miss ourselves

I have this dream in which
we are two cities all street
signs & flocks of birds &
you is the landscape I'd carve
into my wrist w/ a pocketknife

you red vinyl lp
lunar eclipse & heavenly shit

tonight fireworks in my head
& *executioner's blackout* I say *faster* I say

before the panic
& I cry mouthfuls
of orange paint onto
yr half-buttoned shirt

I call that lovely pill-rocket
my mouth burning down
to my breastbone when
everything lets loose

& I wish you'd say
something when I
key yr name into
my neck

but believe me when
I say dirty movies &
cherry bombs like so
many teeth squeezed
into the shotgun of
my jaw

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some of these poems have appeared in the following journals:

Cannibal: “you are a planetarium”

DIAGRAM: “you are paul newman,” “you are black sabbath,” and “you are saxophone”

H_NGM_N: *my ska band will be named zooley deschanel*

Used Cat: “you are delicious” and “you are a brief meditation on a short story”

“you are amplifier” appeared on a broadside for the Kalamazoo Art Center’s Poet’s in Print Series