TOM

Chapter 3

Receipts that read ASDA George are scattered across a ferociously trodden and tattered floor,

Four jumpers new for winter at four ninety-nine each all Tom’s dad could ever afford,

layered up to ignore the storage heater.

“Put more clothes on first Tom!! Leave the heating! I’ve still gotta stock up on food for the freezer, and pay your goddam phone bill for whenever you need to reach me, I’ve just about got enough - look don’t answer back!

Just do as you’re told and fucking leave it!

I have to work six days a fuckin week now, don’t I Tom, what with that bitch leaving, and we’re still just about eating!”

These images and little speeches forever creep in to Tom’s dreams just before the carpet threads and seams finally shred and the whole floor creaks, snaps and opens up beneath him;

adrenalin yet again leaving him sleepless as gravity deceives him.

Every night these dreams repeat this and every time Tom wakes up he writes in his notebook

“We must be vigilant in dismantling this babylon where errors may peacefully rest and keep”.

Tom’s thirty now,

and his past always haunts him.

His visions of his dad’s penniless, hardworking desperation and despair at his mother cheating,

His experience of Chad’s persistent smell of THC and evidence of beatings,

His memory of the fatal consequence when Kulvir, bravest of the family, revealed his deepest secret.

See Tom is terrorised by his compassionate conspiracies of what he might be,

Poor;

Rich;

Immoral;

Intolerant;

Greedy;

Murderous;

Deceiving.

Tom is relentless anxiety nurtured through every word he’s heard, all confidence shot through every sight seen.

So now, Tom only walks to and from work quickly, locks his door and always checks it twice,

Reads the dictionary for hours every night

So every word he ever utters he utters thoughtfully and uses right.

See Tom is the consequence of every single one of us,

The Dorian Gray the whole world painted.

He is every megalomaniac,

Only happy when sick and vallied or coked up with a sniffing tally;

Tom is pissed up in the local alley;

Tom is profit made in shifting mandy;

Tom is tripping,

useless,

off six half Xanies

followed by high street meds to sanitise.

Tom count’s backwards because maths is a fluid language,

Negative

His most common mood is constant fear of false consciousness and being stupid,

drinking Morgan’s rum while watching Newsbeat.

Dum down the world and shift these half weights,

Bag up and shift all forms of canned fake to all these bastard incarnates.

Tom digs up tarmac as 9/11 memorial services are typed out into Google translate;

Tom Google translates “google is trans state”

Tom Googles “man’s gain”

Googles the fix to these bullshit mandates.

Mandates mean question mark

Mandates the real fetid farce;

Mandates mar while calf muscles tear as we all step in bar,

Synchronised dancing through this mandatory bullshit;

Tom weeps at how man did whatever he felt like with

Everything;

Every sin as fingernails tear off sweating skin.

Every kin is forever stepping in these bloody puddles,

faces mixed with muddy rubble while cute girls sit and stroke Tom’s rugged, manly stubble, they have been nurtured to be appropriately plump and cuddled,

Yet some still say gender is something we are born with,

not furthered by a mother’s muzzle.

Train dogs

Train dogs

Train with the tug of a lead to navigate greed and leapfrog each other until the need to molly coddle.

Tom is a prescription meds addict,

every illicit habit and the diagram of how to skin a rabbit;

He is propane and tragic;

A stomach,

Thigh

Mind

And arm

Scarred to the nines with the past, present and future conjugation of the verb “to have”.

Tom screams “please can I have this”.

Tom is fattened on doxa;

He is indoctrinated on habitus.

He is Bourdieu, Freud, Darwin and Lincoln enduring a lifetime of sadness while Butler argues constantly with the Angel of Patriarchy about the third gender of androgyny.

Tom is the 1940 Third Reich use of the Reich Flight Tax

and the african slave trader;

Tom is the fact that autocorrect will not automatically correct to enslaver.

He is every careless giggle at what it does change.

Tom is besotted with desperation,

absolutely obsessed with it,

suffocated as his nanny forcibly ensures it slithers down his gullet.

Tom is bone marrow extraction,

the concept of obligatory organ donation.

He is depicted in the Bayeux tapestry as the comet that comforted William.

Tom is absolutely shredded.

He is the Nationwide need for softly spoken statements,

the alcoholic who was never part of the family.

Tom is desolate yet far from placid.

Tom is not appropriating apparently but yes shall chew on foreign canes while promoting home grown lavish.

Tom is ill taught lane discipline,

biased with no control over wheel spin.

Tom is worn to less than 2 millimetres of tread and dared to handbrake turn and skid.

Tom is grounded in science somewhere.

He is every prize won at a non existent fun fair.

Tom is a dream he rarely enjoys before being awoken by some other selfish fuck.

Tom is everything and anything you could ever really want.

Tom is burdened by being me.

As are you, and as are they.

Tom is the pastor’s daughter that screams marriage is fine even if both are gay.

Tom is rotten because of you

yet somehow hopeful always too.

Tom is conflicted because conflict is the ever present news

and thus impossible of ever being new.

Yes;

We are all a bunch of misfits.

We are all a bunch of fools

We are all hypocrites who’ll condemn reported greed then fiend with mouths sodden from drool.

The issue is most fervent at home, not at school;

It is viral and is forever a violent projectile skew;

We are all so poorly sighted;

So illiterate in our mantras.

We shall scream that nothing works then return to our favourite channel on autopilot.

We are, in essence, all decrepit.

We are insolent, delusional and indulgent;

Yes every one of us is bigoted and shall slate the other’s mule;

We are far from progressive and liberal

yet we are far from set in stone

What we are in dire need of is a greatly different tone.

Do not tell your children that the system failed you for you are then the system that you sue;

Do not segregate by sex, gender, sexuality or race,

being slanderous before reasoned and thus further such hereditary hate.

And parents, I beg you please,

do not reprimand your child with insipid turns of phrase that only serve to perpetuate such an inherent lack of grace.

Though conflicted, Tom, and I, are here to demonstrate that the point of reprimanding should surely be to constructively educate.

Yes we have all come from somewhere surrounded by detriment, thus only we can be the means of our future chances of escape.

Thus, parents, everywhere, I implore you:

Make your child read,

read to them

and always,

always,

read yourself.

A developed and accurate vocabulary of tolerance, I am adamant, is the greatest form of wealth.