

FROM THE



STANDARD
CYCLOPEDIA
OF RECIPES

ADAPTED POEMS



B.C. EDWARDS



Black
Lawrence
Press

For Joshua

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR DANCING,
MIXING, AND BLENDING

No. 949.

How to make Beef, Iron and Wine.

They told us we could not mix
the way Pisces and Gemini should never speak,
look, touch, the rest of it, fuck.

The way tinctures of sherry wine
are made the way the things you extract from beef
are not beef. Are not even the idea of beef
are something else. Are marrow and metals
are even more base than that.

The soul of it. They said we could never be
like the soul of beef.

No. 654.

To clean Dark Furs.

Chipmunks, of all the animals, are the least trustworthy.
Squirrels are the most. You can tell
by the stripes. Skunks too, but skunks
have a whole set of other problems.
Do not burn them. They will not burn well
they will burn like the rest of us. Not well at all.
Cracked lipped and melting overcooked sugar
bubbling like bran added to milk heated over a soft flame
licking the bottom like it's in love or something.
As if it even knows what love is, this rodent. That's how they burn.
People are the same. Those of us that have ribbons
down our backs are not to be trusted. But you have to
get us naked first to be able to tell. You have to
fuck us to be able to tell you have to
want to fuck us before you can tell
if we're squirrels or not.
I know,
I know.
No one said it was fair.

No. 961.

How to make Toy Torpedoes.

Say as much of us as will lie on the blade of a penknife
when we haven't yet figured how to be tender,
how to wrap ourselves in tissue paper and twist at the end.
Say as much as will lie on the blackboards of all the world
when we fail to write in cursive we will be called common
gravel (very clean) but common.
Say as much as will lie on the tips of grasses
wave like our fingers passing notes
wrapped and tied, filled with just enough gunpowder.
Throw ourselves against the walls and the floors
without regard for their dimensions
tiny explosions
from cannons in miniature wars.
The filmstrip says to duck and cover,
when you hear the sound advance to the next frame.
We practice under our chairs
covering each other
below our desks our fingers
scrawl notes on each other's palms.

No. 87.

Brown Spruce Beer.

I take your molasses work lines
I tinker to fix them, I pack them in sand.
Everyday I do this for you. This is how I work.
Pack the lines in sawdust.
If I could I would make burgers for you, instead.
Cheeseburgers or ham, your choice.
But this is as far as I can go.
All I know how.
Eight gallons more.
Boiling well corked so the sand can squeak by, infect the line,
ruin your temper.
Well tied so the dust doesn't give away your age.
If I could I would ride horses for you.
Pluck fish whole out of the river.
Eight gallons fresh.
I would build desks for you.
Entire classrooms of desks.

No. 771.

To cure Tenderness of the Scalp.

In your shower the waters come vertical,
a cylinder like lines like Morse code
like the curtains in all of our best friends'
romper rooms back when people had space
for things like romper rooms.
It is sure of itself, your shower.
Confident with you more than the rest of the room.
Behind and I stand on the dryer side of things, watch
you, doused head back and up, hair slick, your chest
a home for waterfalls and rivers.
This is how children take showers
or film stars being filmed.
The water, all of our spirits rectified, loves
eyes closed, mouth open, loves
begging for a kiss, loves
just a bit, just one bit
filled by the downfall.
There is nothing so unusual and awkward
as standing naked and dry, forgotten in a shower,
next to someone so blissfully wet and ignorant.
This shower hates couples, I say,
but you are stock still turned up waiting
for the kiss or the water
or something (almost anything)
to fill you up completely.

No. 605.

How to destroy Army Worms.

We have appeared in the field.
The cowards among us
are the ones who stand up
who protest
who turn their slow thoughtful turns.
The brave are the quiet, noses
to the stones and the dirt.
At the edges, brooms are raised
dust the sky clean
in wide frustrated strokes.
Our backs are the softest parts
and we are all all backs
we are hand sprinkled for nurturing
coddled cold and sparkling wet with minerals.
If we make it to the corn, their solutions will be too strong.
We will make it to the corn.