



HENRY

**JUSTIN
LUKYN**

PEPPER

HENRY PEPPER
JUSTIN LUKYN

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HENRY PEPPER

008365

The Alley

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON¹

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

1. [Telephone Pole 421]

005300

Henry Pepper: gumboots and
puddles.

004976

As little effort so as not to starve, be
wet or naked.

002980

Booming beneath a roof corner
water fall, a baby blue Smithrite
dumpster takes an invigorating
spring shower. Smithrite is written
across her chest in black block
letters that are outlined super
yellow. With each next letter the
smaller her powerful title veers
left, shooting off into the baby blue
galaxy.

004871

To the side lies a telephone pole
shy of electrical. When cities add
to the nudity of a pole, giving it
crossbeams, armpit transformers,
and triplicate wires, a dumb log
attains fashion.

As for now the pole lies down with
pink ribbon tied around its head like
a bandana, with 150 BCH chalked
in pink onto its flat, wooden head.

The pole's hope is to one day
become a pillar of piffle and prattle,
and to one day be wired in with the
hilly colonnade.

And all you need to do is buy a pink
little phone and plug it in.

008394

At the end of a rainy day, he suddenly recognizes who he's been staring at.

He had always thought of these guys as part of a series. Here does he recognize the singular beauty of the individual telephone pole.

003756

The pole looks noble like nobody's
ever told it don't just stand around
and that if it was asked it never
would have responded do.

But at the bottom of the pole he sees
hand painted yellow block numbers.
He looks down the alley and all of
the poles have them.

002864

Taking one last look at the pole,
he sees, nailed in at eye level, a
kind of metal credit card. Looking
down the alley, all the poles have
them. Of no interest to him and
perhaps not to you either, these
yellow metal cards tell electricians
in the extraordinarily dull terms of
longitude and latitude their precise
position on the earth.

Trying to pry the card loose of its
nails and badly bending the metal,
Henry Pepper pockets the thing to
suffer a week's worth of burdensome
Nabobian guilt.²

2. [Telephone Pole 345] Telephone
cable in cracked yellow tube.

007275

Telephone Pole Block Numbers:

Clark

1240 Mr. Lube /

VH Complete Auto repair

1238 Dosa Hut Indian Cuisine /

Aer. Motor / Ferry Market

1216

Vernon

1180 Movex Trucks

1136

1126 Loomis /

DHL Express & Logistics

1112 Metal cage full of car doors

*Start of telephone pole structures

Glen

The 1000 block blank poles –

2 structures (4 poles)

Raymur

991 – 993 ABC Linen /

Ming Wo

975 – 978

941 – 947

917 – 914 Armored car company /

Coolite Bamboo Products

Campbell

899 – 898 China Arts and Crafts

Imports

883 – 887

873 – 868

? – 854 Korean Gardens Restaurant

835 – 812 Ads Enterprises Inc

811 – 802 G&F Financial Group

Hawkes

791 – 799 Larrivee

769 – 780 Astoria Hotel

757 – 780 Ted Harris Paints

741 – 747 Hastings Auto /

Orca Manufacturing Ltd.

725 – 722

711 – 702 Twenty Hour Store

Heatley

696 – 699

651 – 654 Tin Tin Printing

645 – 648 Burton Systems /

Shamrock Hotel

624 – 629 Union Gospel / Empty lots

600 – 601

Jackson

? – ? Building construction

435 – 437

421 – 420 Hotel Patricia

403 – 412 Funeral Home

Dunlevy

389 – 386

373 – 365

347 – 348 Buddha Temple

341 – 345 Flower's café /

Sunwest Hotel

Gore
copshop

Hkz962372

The alley's wide selection of electricity meters make the streets parking meters look all too much the same – Mickey Mouse ear caps on a stick. His meter (serial Hkz982372) bills Monica's Hair Design. Into the gated building back he gets arm in arm with its pipe elbow and tries to get some sleep.

Din of bumbling bums.

E-emeter actaris Cubic feet temp.

Comp. 60° F

10,000,000

1,000,000

100,100

10,000

1, 000

Hkz982372 Zzz's

009987

Ignoring his brief foray into the telephone pole, he's now back to giving his full attention to the puddles. Consubstantial, Henry Pepper, gumboots and puddles, combined work to smirch the dirty "is" he's been dealt.

In puddles, (loyal, little, looking up) Henry Pepper disappears.

In this dud puddle however, he in part reappears, experiencing memories of the barbers.

Seated in the large swivel chair, pumped down and swung around, a shaky hand mirror presented him with the back of his head.

Returning from deep in the back of the reflected head, everybody in

nice cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice
cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice cut,
nice cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice
cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice cut,
nice cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice
cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice cut,
nice cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice
cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice cut,
nice cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice
cut, nice cut, nice cut, nice cut,
nice cut, nice cut . . . ”

009287

The city was about to break a rain record and the people that hate the rain were nonetheless willing to make an exception to wish that it would rain some more. For their not beating the misery of the past the misery of the present's been made worse. This while it's raining less.

005285

It's rained little of late and rains less
and less. Henry Pepper, standing
in a puddle of the dying number,
reconsiders the telephone poles as a
series.

Fraught with seasonal anxiety, he
spends the next week going back
and forth between one puddle and
his electricity meter.

008333

A puddles man, he cannot remember back to what the telephone poles first looked like when he first discovered this alley. The puddles of this alley were superior to all others and he was quick to Nabob sweep every other alley in the city. He wasn't thinking of telephone poles at all. Of course he knew they were there he just never played with the fact. The normal person he figures would probably have taken in at first, the almost medieval in appearance, striking high and massive procession of telephone structures. The way they are squeezed in between the low and narrow alley walls, wired up together in a great tangle. To the regular person this would have probably looked like an archaic world of wood and wire and one

quite not of this one.

Taking one structure alone, he sees that two telephone poles stand on either side of the alley. They are joined high above by three levels of crossbeams. Upright beams connect these. Add whatever electrical and there you have one of the standard telephone pole structures. There are some that lean incredibly and look like they are about to fall over. The structures tower and undulate with the tiny hills. They are connected by little waves of triplicate wires that break atop crossbeams in crests of three electric bells.³

When walking under the telephone pole structures, one after the other, it's as if you've passed through something...

3. [Telephone Pole 993] Tossed sketchbook full of bulldog drawings.

007365

Bum croquet.

008345

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

009317

In a town dead spot, in gumboots
and requisite puddles, Henry
Pepper's oblivious to the month of
rain it's been since first meeting the
individual pole.

Wednesday, next week, hustling
down the dried up alley blocks and
sure there was a puddle somewhere
he's restlessly figuring out if, 'Do my
feet rub my socks and my socks rub
my boots. Or do my boots rub my
socks and my socks rub my feet . . .'⁴

Eventually he calms down in a
puddle that was hidden behind a
dumpster. Resenting the walk and
search he thinks that puddles should
be no more than a step apart.

4. [Telephone Pole 654] Curb half sunk
in compact gravel.

Life [not his idea] is movement.

Too much of it threatens sweat and
looks like trying. Like trying on top
of living.

009456

Standing on one gumboot he peers
into the sock-hot chamber of the
other and sees that future looks
bleak.

Hkz962372

Hkz982372 Zzz's

All night long he is chased by a log
with wings.

Din of bumbling bums.

E-emeter actaris Cubic feet temp.

Comp. 60° f

10,000,000

1,000,000

100,100

10,000

1,000

Hkz982372 Zzz's

007553

The alley next week:

CLARK

VERNON puddle 1

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL puddle 2

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON puddle 3

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

It is a three puddle day.

Doing a quick little Clarke to Gore,
he decides on the 400 block puddle.

Once in tell his thin presence to
beat it. Nauseous, he begins to
remember the time his parents

left him a week with friends. It was supposed to be fine. They had Booberry cereal.

Account of that first morning:

1. Grinning dad held coffee.
2. Robed mom smiled from newspaper.
3. Children lamely enacted their toys.
4. Poured a bowl of their cereal and froze with one of their spoons in hand. It had two metal dots on a creamy handle.
5. One of these spoons knocked up against bad teeth.
6. Another of these spoons broke a milk line between the lips of bloated

and loud crunching cheeks. White
trickles ran down neck unnoticed.

7. One of the spoons spindled in
mom's bony hand as she made faces
at the paper.

8. Dad's coffee breath blew over the
table like mountainous winds.

008461

In puddle two he watches the
wrappers of a hooker's Hubba Bubba
blow by.

A full pack over the hour. Each
piece comes tumbling past at a
bulldog's trot.

003210

Standing in the last puddle of the alley and the last puddle of three seasons of rain, the clouds up and leave to rain someplace else as puddle one evaporates right from under him.

004389

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE⁵

5. [Telephone Pole ?] Wrinkled GQ.

005923

It hasn't been mentioned and it sure agrees. Henry Pepper is anti-orifice.

002967

Enter without ceremony the Twenty Hour Store. First yelled at for using the alley entrance, he stocks up: Black Bart, Pep' 'n Ched' and Ensure.

He downs his meal replacement shake as looking over his ATM receipt. It was last year that he received his small inheritance. It hardly warranted an early retirement even if the young man's felt retired since birth. Like the puddles drying up, to the grave to be dependent on this strange death money that's dying faster than him, it worries him. Tearing morbidly into the Pep' 'n Ched' and huddling behind his electricity meter, Henry Pepper bears a vicious mind not to come out until fall.

009376

Later that week, running to poo,
heading east, he looks like the
gingerbread man with orifice
Smarties.⁶

The tall sides of his big black rubber
gumboots loosely wobble as he runs
past the little bushes that decorate
the alley. Pat little green balls, all
up and down the sides of the alley
they've been planted in neatly
measured intervals. Behind them
needles and nudity of the crouched
and shitwhispering alley people
flash before his eyes.

No vacant shrubs, near the end
of the alley, at the thousand block
thorns, he stands out of breath.
Gobs of multicolored rubbers

6. [Telephone Pole 978] Littered dirty
diaper.

surround his achromatic Thanatos
rubbers. The thousand black thorns,
bushes full of murderers, ordinarily
he steers clear of them but this is an
emergency.

009275

He puzzles over a maze of shop
carts.

008396

Inflexible legs duck walk into the
thickets.

003067

My mind's eye squeezed into this
meat mask?

009275

Porn lay scattered on the bush path and while the funnier pages have been laid out for others to see, the other pages in amidst post-orgasm self-detestation have been scrunched and chucked so as never to be seen again.

Later on, this self-rejecting societal reject who's constantly rejected by fellow societal rejects, who thought he threw out something that was found thrown out and so cannot be thrown out, comes to realize that he is not as through with the page that he crumpled up as he thought. Searching for it and finding it again with a a renewed excitement, he then stops to regret having treated the page so badly. Even though he fails to have the foresight to know that he shouldn't scrunch it up

again, to this time afterwards to at least leave the page the room to be used once or twice more.

Henry Pepper, duck walking ontop of bum porn, making his frightened way into the thousand block thorns, from all the effort, has a face that's blood-red as the paid naked he tramples. In just looking at their pushing expressions underfoot the premature flight of his wingless logs is sorely tempted.

003068

Hidden in the public blackberries behind Henry Pepper there's a large and sketchy field surrounded by a tall razor-wire fence. Behind this field there is a giant train tunnel [CN Rail will prosecute trespassers]. In the center of this field there is an immense black pole. It holds up a giant billboard that presents at one hundred feet above a giant and near naked lady to miles of Hastings's traffic.

She can be seen from Burnaby.
She is a gift upon entering the city, something that Burnaby is in short supply of.

007365

In answer to a bad feeling our
pooing Pepper looks up where
overhead, reaching out from the
back of the bushes all the way into
the alley, there is a blood purple
thorn rod. It dangles at its tip a pair
of white panties. They've a nice
little pattern of little blue daises.

No place for a café.

000572

Strenuously crouched in doing his thing, he attempts to envision, to make it happening, the total eclipse of the orifice.

The universe fights him.

Both standing guard and going he looks out to the end of the thorn tunnel by which he entered where he sees coming into an orb of summer light, a bum describing loose little circles in the alley on a thousand dollar bike.⁷ They are cocky little circles that grow smaller and smaller. Now they are being done with no hands. The front 250 dollar wheel starts to swerve wildly.

7. [Telephone Pole 1000] Bottle cap with a white K on it.

When it looks as if the bum is going to crash with the front wheel spinning in upon itself, the bum reaches up dramatically to grab the worthless panty lure.

The elongated thorn rod whooshes back. A shorter rod lashes out.

Unharmd, the bum drives away where a Henry Pepper who has had it wipes with a nearby thorn leaf to then pull up his pants with the greatest dissatisfaction.

Once again Henry Pepper is duck walking beating a hasty retreat. At one point, a little too far ahead of himself, he loses his balance falling back from duck walking into a little bit of crab walking.

006349

Bums on bikes by the sea.

When bums have the nicest bikes it
has got to be the last days.

008257

Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-
Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding
...

Orifice far from its droppings,
Henry Pepper stands safe inside
a People Pack where deep
resentments are being expressed for
having to wait on a train.

The alley is a good place to swear.
Even the alley silence is full of
curses for there is ever swearing
inside of the alley person's head. All
opportunities to swear taken, there
is none greater than a train crossing.

To swear all the way up, safe in
the squeal and boom, to be fully
accepted in the long and lasting
volume of the rolling metal is a
real treat for an alley person. One

can begin at last with lots of time
to move around inside of their
swearing their own style.

Night swearing and train swearing
nourish self esteem, protect one
from the sunshine and silence in
which thrive the mild reproaches
from alley people who are supposed
to be on your side. As you let it out,
like they had a job and a home, they
shake their heads at you [Whatever
happened to him.] like it you alone
are the fuck up in this world. [What
the hell is he on about.] Alley
people switch between swearing and
being mocked and being part of a
group mocking one swearing when
not swearing at a train as a group or
swearing alone in the night beyond
reproach.

Humanity is a time bomb. Each
person is a game like Jenga. To win

is to master the delicate balance of stacking somebody with as many reasons to swear as possible, on top of as many reasons as possible to trick them out of swearing. It is no wonder people dream of being that person who's free to swear in anybody's face at any time, any place. Meanwhile somebody is working their way towards swearing in yours and if they succeed others secretly afraid of you will get the guts to do it it. Down you go, three, four, five people, in the toilet spiral of life.⁸

Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding . . .

8. [Telephone Pole 1000] White Y front underwear sprinkled in tree buds, and graffiti that says Live Free 2006 and beside it Die Poor 2007.

003497

Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-
Ding-Ding . . .

The People Pack swearing at
the train: Fred Derf and Pam,
somebody always loves Pam, a
young man with zits, one teary
high ringing lip zit stinging in
agonizing conjunction with a deep,
chin zit, Fawnda Denim, Tammy,
and Alfonso Kesk, junkies, hookers,
bums, and cool people who these
days it is hard to tell the difference
between, cheek scratchers, single
moms, Humanzee and Voodoo
shrunken trucker hat, not to
mention the star of these humble
notes.

In People Packs and inner city
group jaywalks, the spontaneous

naughtiness of which, we learn
of the secretive impatience of the
coward who hides in the log.

“Come on you [obscene] train. I
ain’t got all [obscene] day.”

It is unfortunate however that this
People Pack has been fooled by the
cityscape, convinced to renounce
their aforementioned identities to
practice instead total identification
with the [O’Doul’s 0.1%] inner
business man. Once again, unlike
the alley people they are, they who
are merely practice swearing, swear
at the train like they didn’t have
time for it, like it came to them as a
great financial loss. Meanwhile the
grand boom of the train periodically
shakes the immense self hatred of
the neighborhood.

“You Clark, Hawkes [obscene]
[obscene] Heatley, Jackson and
damn Dunlevy Gore . . . !”

When there are three boxcars left to
the 110, for no apparent reason the
sworn at train begins rolling back
the way it came.

At this, the one guy in the alley
above swearing, raises his hand in
a gesture of tossing in the towel.
Where the train is unreasonable
reasonable him just turns around
and leaves in the direction he came.
He is on again with his travels
between the bad moods left unfelt
behind. The distance between them
keeps decreasing, ask your mom, ask
your dad. One day he will stand in
one and the same spot and swear his
head off late into the nights. It will
be below some girl's first apartment.

Boy did it feel like forever but now
approaching is the train's highly
anticipated caboose. To the alley
people's delight, parading out of
the caboose window is the reeking
caboose grandpa. With a head like
a perogy and white hotdog lips,
he's known as the old rail witch for
his once having been seen at the
Ovaltine Cafe dressed in Tear Away
Pants with a moon and star outer
space camouflage pattern. Rumor
also has it that he wears a custom
cut crystal fanny pack full of Bridge
Mixture said to match his clinking
twenty sided testicles.

The People Pack, only moments
earlier in a state of out rage, now,
like nothing were ever the matter,
smile and wave back at the reeking
caboose grandpa like he was the
most fun to be had. An excellent

trick of the cities, the reeking
caboose grandpa is swallowed up
along with his sedation caboose by
the big black train tunnel behind
the sketchy field.

Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-Ding-
Ding-Ding . . .

Ding.

004424

Crossing the train tracks, we begin
ascent of the steep piss streaked
pitch heading towards the hilltop
crown of blacktop.

Two classical boulders mark the
Glen to Campbell alley entrance on
each of which poor people names,
Dave plus Doreen, have been
written inside pink, drippy hearts.
Lovers and vandals, between these
unofficial landmarks, the little train
gathering proceeds. All are still
under the shortlasting good spirits
spell put on them by the stinky old
rail witch.

There is a white fire hydrant. It is
no ordinary hydrant. Not only that
it is white, but it has a green toque
and candy red nozzles. Plus there
is, balanced on top of one of its tall

upright head bolts, a nearly full
bottle of beer.

The People Pack passes through
a huge telephone pole structure.
The hill begins. It is steep, the heat
oppressive. Stamina is low and
the side bushes look eager to sink
their green leaves into the social
combine. It is behind green leafy
balls that people are fast gambling
away their good looks. There are
countless hot people going down
the tubes, their faces scratched off.
It is behind alley bushes that so
many job opportunities are being
frozen off.

007356

Alley bushes:

Changing rooms if you will, hell's pompoms. If one thing's for sure it's that alley people cannot wait to climb out of their underwear. It is what they can do right, "You stupid, stupid, stupid bush." It's long been an alley tradition to blame a bush for everything. Climbing out of your underwear and then throwing them as hard as you can in a bush's face, both branches and roots wind up through the leg holes. It explains why the alley bushes wear underwear, sometimes several pairs at a time.

002896

Hot socks.

In gumboots, a stifled pair of sweaty feet wiggle as they near the top of the hill. Blinded by the sun, Henry Pepper looks away where it fries the back of his head. He sees a side bush with a Styrofoam cup on its head that looks like an Afro Comb. He covers his eyes and walks ahead. Five sewer lids are in a clump on the crown of blacktop. In his next step they glow gold. A heat wave ripples above them. There is fast a mounting sound.

Out of the heat wave shoots a white limousine full of screaming bridesmaids. The screams of the limo carry to the bottom of the hill and fade. The screams rekindle and then the screams die.

Hkz962372

Hkz982372 Zzz's

Telephone pole credit cards read:

egg egg egg

egg egg egg

Din of bumbling bums.

E-emeter actaris Cubic feet temp.

Comp. 60° f

10,000,000

1,000,000

100,100

10,000

1,000

Hkz982372 Zzz's

007667

Limo equals scream.

009523

He wakes in the middle of the night
with his electricity meter looking
strange. The elegant piping is gone.
All that he sees are 36 needles
aquiver inside of 18 floating glass
bubbles. He takes his arm out of the
pipe elbow.

004632

A big building sends you a bill?

007204

It has rained and there are summer puddles. They are scattered here and there. Henry Pepper doesn't stand in summer puddles.⁹

Legs spread, a summer puddle between them, he looks down at a reflection of the moon. It is full and yellow and looks like his sore nut.

There was this bulb once.

It appeared as a reflection on the surface of his coffee. In nicely lit sentence circles he could read the bulb's wattage and manufacturer. On its bottom grey burn spots made the bulb look identical to the pockmarked moon. Right when

9. [Telephone Pole 629] Pep' 'n Ched' wrapper.

he was about to realize something,
the old bulb started to wobble in its
liquid with the unlit footsteps of the
passing waiter.

Hkz962372

Hkz982372 Zzz's

The reeking caboose grandpa has
sparkling bombs on his heels.

Din of bumbling bums.

E-emeter actaris Cubic feet temp.

Comp. 60° f

10,000,000

1,000,000

100,100

10,000

1,000

Hkz982372 Zzz's

004343

Wakes up, the words bomb bomb
socks on his lips.

Good morning sunshine floods
the alley and the focus in on the
rillets of guck that have dripped
down the dumpsters here shown
in full light. Clarke to Gore, the
chain of dumpsters stink in concert.
All their lids are sprung open and
in a rippling heat stench wave the
successive overflow of black garbage
bags glitter.

Heavy competition for alley trash
turns every day into a garbage day.
There is no stylistic unity between
the dumpsters. Do not leave it to the
dumpster companies to come up
with a style of their own. Difficult
as it is to make a dumpster look bad,

companies like Canadian Waste can do it. They offer an inexpensive service passed as patriotism with a line of forest green dumpsters.¹⁰

Henry Pepper wonders if the whole universe isn't 94 percent garbage. In such a case it should be Smithrite that governs all matters. Their dumpsters are the best. Plus their trucks are stylized to match. Both bear the impressive Smithrite logotype on their sides while the trucks and dumpsters of other companies bear no obvious relation to one another. The few that do, it only helps to expose the boring relationship that exists between them. When Smithrite dumpsters are raised by Smithrite trucks, their

10. [Telephone Pole 654] Nude centerfold with extreme bikini lines.

wheels lightly spinning, this way
and that, as the trash gets tickled out
of them, the other dumpsters watch.

003857

From on top of the Heatley hill
he looks out beyond the city limits
to Burnaby. Henry Pepper has a
Burnaby heart. In his left rib cage
there is a ticking, nondescript
municipality. The heart of Burnaby.
Up and down the alley hills, he who
hates to move, who likes only to
stand in puddles, passes like other
alley people through the telephone
pole structures entirely dominated
by thoughts of Burnaby.

009456

Moonlight strikes the broken neck of a beer bottle. He crouches down to look into it. [Rear view beer.] In it there's the reflection of an upside down telephone pole and it is nearly bought into as a thing of beauty. A little later it is nearly bought into by an amateur paranoia.

007462

Trying not to think of telephone
poles, there they are.

007365

It would be admirable, in his books, to go to the grave not liking a single thing.

Perhaps that is where he went wrong. He allowed for puddles. Even though it is not the highest standard he can think of, to go to the grave having only liked puddles is something that he could live with. Sure, he kids himself with liking Smithrite. It is however only a dummy corporation, part of a private joke, his own personal disposal service that throws out for him everything that isn't puddles.

It is the beauty of letting the world slip through your fingers.

By next week, as if without deciding, he's gotten into the habit of blindly

passing through telephone pole
structures. He passes under them
for something to do. He walks under
telephone pole structures as if it
were some kind of a matter.

006457

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

003676

Let us begin by saying that at the start of this venture, we who were bored beyond belief made ourselves phone the necessary people to drag them into a mess that none of us ever wanted to be in nor ever believed that we could ever get out of. On principle we've persisted and today we find ourselves worse off than ever before. We are however always ready to begin ever the more ambitious, and more costly projects.

008397

Get a job.

004769

In the alley. Between the behinds.
In the slim space appointed for
trash. Here takes place our story.
Between the behinds of businesses
who rather than just give away all
there garbage from out the back,
sell some of it from out of the front,
is where, takes place our story. The
front is not our story.

Passing through the outdated
telephone pole structures and
adding up his Clark to Gores,
Henry Pepper keeps feeling as if the
cityscape were telling Burnaby out
there like an idle kid in the outfield
to look alive. Why is there always
this pressure from the city? He
takes it to heart. It is just a clump
of buildings. They are stubby.
Beyond Gore they hardly rise over
the top of the Vancouver Police

Department which acts like a house
on Halloween with its lights out
while it's Night of the Living Dead
out front at Main and Hastings.

The cityscape. [Rotation of masks in
a faceless nightmare.]

It's constant presence excites
as beats upon the minds of the
permanent residents of the alley.
The big air of building norms aims
to put down and push out the alley
people. Its hidden message drives
them all out of their little minds
and into the less competitive land of
Burnaby.

003084

Walking through the telephone poles Henry Pepper keeps seeing graffiti pieces. It would seem that signing your name over and over would become boring at some point. It is like signing out forms, little administrative functionaries with spray paint. In fact the graffiti names are as stylized and unreadable as the signatures of our city officials. The practice of signing out endless forms – decrepit building sign here, delivery truck sign there, and co-sign this dumpster will you — so that the bureaucracy that's rebelled against is instead scaled and wedded to.

Leaning against a telephone pole he stands again on his own. He pats the big thing and continues on.

003871

The alley cups wait on the two
clouds on the opposite sides of the
sky.¹¹

11. [Telephone Pole 702] Ketchup
packet.

008375

The racket his gumboots make
on the pebbles becomes apparent
when stepping onto a clean sheet of
pavement where all goes quiet.

There is one pebble on the plot.

It is the Nabob pebble and it
reminds Henry Pepper of the old
commercial where in the dark
office, before a giant bureau table,
the Nabob Man stood with a giant
meter stick in hand dressed in all
incandescent whites. His suit, his
shoes and his coiffure of beaming
white hair, he had the glow and chi
of a toothy sewer grate favoured by
moonlight and Novocaine.

The Nabob Man, like the fallen
angel of London Drugs, fallen
into his hell from a bright store of

cheap deals, an earthly imitation of heaven. The Nabob Man stood before a bureau table completely covered in completely covered in coffee beans.

The Nabob Man looked up and spoke, “At Nabob, we only use the finest beans.”

His meter stick came down. He swept the table. Beans showered and bounced at his white dress shoes. They kept showering and showering all over the floor. How many not good enough beans? In the end, at the far end of the table, there lay the select small handful of Nabob’s finest beans.

Henry Pepper is not one for television. But the day he saw this commercial was the day that he

Nabob swept his entire wardrobe.
He went on to Nabob sweep his toys
and friends and parents, everything
that is of course for the ones looking
up, his loyal and little puddles.
This is why his mind is now at a
loss racing to conjure excuses for
the telephone poles for they don't
measure up to the Nabob standard.
It is the much stronger side of
him that asks if he is going to let
these wired hordes of substandard
affiliates sit on his face all summer.
Once having acceded to first shit,
what's next? The critical death of
Henry Pepper, night gathers around
him and erases faces and hearts, his
heart and her face, their faces and
their hearts . . .

008323

Lighters light up black doorways
and play clips, little video feeds from
hell. From out of the blackness,

You stink.

The object of this remark is a bag
lady pushing a huge shop cart. She
stops to look around. Unable to
find the maker of the remark she
addresses the alley at large knowing
the person out there.

“The whole damn neighborhood
stinks.”

After how many hundreds of
telephone pole structures later
Henry Pepper overhears someone
jabbering in a French Canadian
accent from under a staircase,

I've got a billion satellites focused on
mee. I am the selfeesh Chomsky.

009892

The wooden gates of the dead. He walks through them out to gain a big body of telephone pole wisdom when new to him are his own ten shadows. Peripheral scumbags, they wheel around him when he walks. They grow and shrink and spin like some kind of a merry go round of thieves making him incredibly nervous. When he stops to calm his nerves he feels like a big shadow flower and feels completely ridiculous.¹²

12. [Telephone Pole 348] Two halves of a television.

009285

What is man?

007256

Man is a piñata full of dramas and party pubes. The sharp edge of event is upon him. It is wise that he therefore learn to live below the level of incident.

004632

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

007389

He takes out the metal credit card from his back pocket and traces the longitudinal and latitudinal numbers.

003971

There is one telephone pole structure he's been noticing in particular and tonight he wants to climb it. Up a dumpster, and up the fire escape ladder, and up the staircases between fire escape balconies, he comes to stand looking out level to an electrical platform. Swinging one gumboot over the iron leaves of the fire escape railing, and then the other, Henry Pepper with one hand still holding the railing behind him, carefully steps out onto the electrical platform of the telephone pole structure.

He never imagined being this close to what he saw above. The gear heavy telephone pole crossbeams now right in front of him just at knee level appear like electric

crucifixes. Between them are five electrical bins that look like garbage cans with clamps and black tubes writhing out of them plugging into all sorts of places. He sits down on one of these plugged in garbage cans and takes in the great alley view. Henry Pepper, up on top the biggest telephone pole structure, sits not saying a word, edified by the dying machinery of chit chat.

009275

All night long, underneath, SUV
after SUV, conservative bald johns
stroke the shitty goatees meant but
to add to their dignity while looking
for the cheapest and prettiest
hooker.

008376

As things stand, nights are now spent on the electrical platform while days are spent walking through the telephone pole structures. Naps, as usual, are taken behind the electricity meter. No matter where he is though, the clackety ruffle of the automated panels of the billboard, not much higher than his telephone pole chair, is always running through his mind. [Thought in the black of the head.] Summer mind of a million escalators, the clicking of the billboard panels, it is yet another trick, a soothing and lulling bit of self deception, one that will shamefully deliver him into fall.

003762

The Astoria Hotel's neon sign. From his telephone pole platform he can see how it hangs over Hastings street. The sign like a neon dragon would do better in the Patricia Hotel's fire escape which is like a large bird cage. For it is time to treat the back like the front. As to making amends, that wild and exciting sign would be a start. The letters light up, first in blue, next in pink, and end in an end of the night red, spelling over and over the name Astoria. He imagines her like some party whore who even the religious cannot dislike even in spite of her sinful ways. Down the frontispiece of the otherwise modest hotel the sign as a whole is outlined by a golden yellow line. It has the peculiar shape of a slutty golden boot. Beside the high heeled golden

boot there is a stack of seven white stars. The sign seems to promise a trashy night out in cheap eternity.

004438

Henry Pepper cannot stand to be in the same room as himself. Once again the alley comes through for him. He moves between thinking of the alley as a place at all, to thinking of the alley as his place alone. The second way of thinking is seldom used though for it puts him into competition with the alley others. Everywhere there are articles of underwear on the floor to break through that delusion, alley people with bed head and sometimes blankets over their shoulders. They often scowl at him as to if to say what are you doing in my place. In their hands tremble the sad snacks of social workers and the Styrofoam cups of hot chocolate of religious volunteers. Even though he needs to think of the alley as his place alone in order to trick himself out

of having to spend rent on a place,
he does not want to get into fights
with alley others who spend their
whole life fighting to believe in that
impossible premise, or going even
further, to hatefully prove that the
alley is there bedroom alone.

What are you doing in my
bedroom? You too? And you? And
you?

009371

Sunbeams band the telephone
poles and gay motes dance at their
grassy base. The hand painted
block numbers at the bottom of
the telephone poles hop after one
another. They look like yellow piss
bunnies chasing each other over
the hills of condom backed pebbles.
The pigeons have shat two alley
blocks white.

009342

At Princess death threats repeat all
over the alley walls. It is the names
of the lovers Dave and Doreen from
the rocks he saw that day of the
train crossing. It appears they are
broken up.

006655

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

008257

Looking back, Henry Pepper was always alley material. He knew the earth sucked the day they taught him to spell Wednesday. He should have known by the way he used to wait out his cheerful moods by the toilet to later come out with a fresh scowl.¹³

13. [Telephone Pole 914] There is a human sized hole cut in the fence. On the wall inside in Chinese English it says: NO INTERCOURSE.

001928

Bums insist you shake their hands.
These hands have chilblains, stink
of booze and show an unsorted
caked mixture of urine and
semen and stains, dried blood and
dumpspter guck. It is something like
that old hand buzzer trick posing
as a test of one's humility. When
Henry Pepper refuses to shake
hands the bums [dead wrong] act
like it were the rope back to society
denied them.

Hkz962372

Hkz982372 Zzz's

Slug with a goatee.

Din of bumbling bums.

E-emeter actaris Cubic feet temp.

Comp. 60° f

10,000,000

1,000,000

100,100

10,000

1,000

Hkz982372 Zzz's

005876

A Styrofoam cup takes wing and glides the elaborate tar doodles done by the bored to death road crack repair man. The white cup floats along the alley and passes through the telephone pole structures with a grace Henry Pepper will never know. Henry Pepper's clunky gumboots in view of it come off retarded.

007295

CLARK

VERNON

GLEN

RAYMUR

CAMPBELL

HAWKES

HEATLEY

JACKSON

PRINCESS

DUNLEVY

GORE

004653

He takes the metal telephone pole
credit card out of his pocket and
flings it into the night.

He decides to sideline himself until
fall.

Why the alley? Why not the sewers?
Should it be the woods?

008475

In a few weeks, in the first pouring rain of the first of the next three seasons of rain, Henry Pepper comes running out from behind his electricity meter. He hurries into the best puddle out there. In a short while he wants out of that puddle and spends a long time looking for a better one. He stops when suddenly something tells him in a very forceful way that he'll never want to stand in a puddle ever again. Just like that the whole alley starts to look overwhelmingly stupid. He suddenly becomes acutely aware of himself getting rained on..

