



Bernard Wills

Tahir

“Fuck man, dis is bullsheet man, bullsheet!”

There goes Tahir again,
madly whipping the dishwasher with a towel...

no-one takes much notice.

You see Tahir was dinged on the head in a Turkish jail,
or so we suppose,
and is subject to these sudden rages-

they flare up, flare out.
Now to be fair there definitely is
a bullshit aspect
to the way things go around here,

like how our hard work gets undone,
the dishes soiled and muddied once again
in ghastly nightmares of recurrence
that even Nietzsche might have shuddered at:

but a working man must quench
his sense of the absurd

and that's the skill
Tahir has lost to the blunt end of a billy-club.

Yet Sisyphus kept at his stone
so back to work he goes

and anyway the Chefs have tricks
to discipline Tahir,
to haul him back in line,

to keep the wheels of being grinding,





turning those satanic mills...

Let him peel a box of garlic...see how he likes that...
pungent past the threshold of his pain!
Or set him to de-veining shrimp!

But here Tahir gets back his own-
he only pretends to do it
and now the clientele
are eating shrimp shit at 30 bucks a plate.

But today Tahir is back at the dishes,
and I'm there too,

among these lost and luckless, dispossessed
and I don't quite get why
as all my friends have jobs in the D.N.D

and I use the word job loosely
for all they do is play Tetris
for \$10.50 an hour
in a magical fairy land of money for nothing:

but anyway, as I say, here I am
because I can't get a better job
and Tahir has turned dish-pit theologian on me:

"Hey man, what fuckeeng religion are you man?"

"Christian..." I say, sheepishly,
hoping these words
do not commit me to anything too drastic

by way of embracing the other
when the other is a nut like Tahir.

"No way man! Dats bullsheet man!
Islam is best religion man!"





Well, Tahir has something on his mind
besides flogging the dishwasher
so I run with it....I ask him “why”?

“Four wives man! You fuck all da time!”

Well...that is an argument at least...
it displays rare candor too, some brutal honesty
concerning matters of the ‘spirit’

but really, four wives? From where?
And like that’s legal too!
No friggin’ way. To throw back in your face
your favorite word, Tahir, this is bullshit.
Fuck son. Get real.

You lack impulse control.
You are subject to rages.

Your head is damaged.
You will only wash dishes...ever...

because...for some reason...
the chefs are not particular
about who does this shitty job

and so, you’ve little hope of one wife
let alone four
though you recite the shahada for all you’re worth

though you believe it from your very core: in fact,
just put a sock in it Tahir.

And while we’re at it,
Mark, Herb, you stuff it too.

I’m sick of all the crap you losers talk
about the shit you’ll never, ever have.





But heck. What am I raging to myself about?
Not even sure I know. Hell, I'm no better.

I am, moreover, happy to admit
that this is just your symbol for the grail,
your myth of Eros,

the alienated form of your desire:

that happy bounty, the plenitude enjoyed
by the student workers at the DND.

