

# Please Do Not Use This Toilet (If Possible)

Jim Davis

*Did you hear about the man who swallowed a yo-yo? Some clodhopper down in Garfield Park. Real classy guy. The butcher said to my father, if he's havin' girl problems, I feel bad for your son,*

before handing over thirty links of venison sausage. There's a sign on the busted toilet. Magnavox in the corner above the bread plays a homemade video of Pontius Pilate doing Pilates, sweating to the old

testament, read by Morgan Freeman, until the part where Jesus leaks – Red Red Wine & other UB40 songs have been dubbed over, that's when cassette tapes are side by side, press play & record (●)

at the same time. My father took a number, got back in line. The woman behind him died of a peanut allergy & the butcher said *did you hear the one about the canary in the coal miner's pants?*

A galaxy of pig blood on his apron. Milky Way melted in his chest pocket. Everything is bite-sized to a big enough mouth. He stopped dancing to reggae when hardwood floors put a splinter in the meat

of his foot. Did you hear about the man whose toe was stolen by gangrene? He sold my father Bambi links, Rudolf links, bull testicles & recorded over his earliest religion. Jesus used video

cassette, he said, sticking his finger in the pronged wheel of his one & only workout tape, leaking lengths of silver film, said *it died of repetitious stalagmite*, silver tape recoiling as he twisted.

# Standard

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Tampa Bay dropped 7 on the Sox, Ozzie resettles his grimace. Reading MZ & Sappho, trying to focus in a ripple of Rackwon, fish tacos & the shit-head teaching his niece the ins & outs of selling candy over the fence to people eating turkey burgers, fish tacos & craft beer. His neck tattoo is freehand Megatron with a baseball bat. He whispers to her & walks away so people might mistake them separate. Sappho says  
*Am I still longing*

*for my lost virginity?*

Matthew says the rest, through the filter of a bad rap. I'm saying I should draw more, make fewer excuses. Dwight Howard is moving to Houston & they're playing his dunks on the other side of the window. This is not a normal place to be alone, but the girl I was dating is in Milwaukee bouncing half-drunk to what's left of Wu-Tang, sweating with some other guy & there's a relationship between the amount of chive & lime, & the freshness of your fish. I've been poisoned before, everything left me at once. I put thoughts that don't belong together together like popcorn on a string. Make that face again. Confess everything.

**Jim Davis** lives, writes, and paints in Chicago, where he edits *North Chicago Review*. His work has appeared in *Seneca Review*, *Adirondack Review*, *The Midwest Quarterly*, and *Columbia Literary Review*, among others. In addition to the arts, Jim is a teacher, coach, and international semi-professional football player.