

Git Along Little Doggies

By Richard Oyama

The Fokker prop plane landed in Tanganyika. Bill and Hank descended the stairs. They breathed in the African tropic air.

“The mountains,” Bill said.

“The clouds,” Hank said.

“The lions.”

“The pretty black boys.”

There was silence. It subsided like gastritis. They were abruptly hungry for meat and blood and gristle.

“Let’s have a feast,” Bill said.

He took a shotgun from the sidesaddle and shot a wild boar and slaughtered her in front of the piglets. He threw the mauve intestines at them. They groveled and commenced to make like piggies.

Bill carved a stick from a brobdingnag tree, sharpening it at both ends, and stuck the winged pig through the anus. It did not squeal for it was dead.

“Scumbag,” said Hank.

The sun also rose as they ground Ethiopian coffee beans, roasted them in a wok, inserted the funnel filter and set the Plexiglass kettle on the campfire. Hank dialed the pink timer.

“For Papa,” Bill said.

“Good to be away from women.”

“Their garments.”

“Their oyster cunts.”

“Their lipstick and cold cream.”

“Their vari-sized tits.”

It was good to be away from them, here in the wide open dark continent, under falling stars, sparks that could ignite a prairie fire and the animals who rightly fear us. It was good to be big, brutish, cruel, stupid, malicious, egomaniacal and narcissistic. It was good to be constructed of tin and have no heart. That way you feel nothing. It was good to feel nothing.

“Look at my hirsute chest,” Bill boasted.

“I walk funny,” Hank confessed.

They withdrew again into silence, having said too much. Where was the whiskey on the rocks? Where were the whores? Have them dance on the bar and sneak a peek. Just lie there and let me grab.

“I got to feed the horses,” Hank said and disappeared into the veld.

But we have no horses, thought Bill, we came in a jeep and grimaced. I am thinking about that Hawks picture as a love story between Duke and Monty, the woman a beard. It is good to be without a beard. You can shit and piss and come all by yourself or with your companion. Then sit around the fire with a guitar and sing lonesome songs as a train in the distance pipes your loneliness.

A horse may die, thrashing in its death-throes. Lots of Injuns get shot. Long shot of man against landscape. Eisensteinian montage of heroic prole faces before the cattle drive. What I mean to say is women have a different energy. The comfort of flesh. Milk. Blood. Urine. If we are an ape, she is the moon at which man beats his chest and yowls. It is terrible to feel her beauty, her touch, her abundance, her natural womanness, her bird, her carnal bliss, her soul. It is best to be alone and tinker with a machine involved with itself and to make of coffee and killing big animals a cult of mastery. A good cuppa joe. The divorce cost me the bitch. They repossessed the truck. There’s a foreclosure notice nailed on my door. I blame socialism. Must choke off my mind like Nick. Stay out of the shade on the lawn where the Chevy is up on the blocks for beneath the shadow it is sad. I wonder how many images of a cowboy alone before the campfire were painted or shot or filmed? Women complicate feeling. That is wrong. I want to feel nothing.

“Where is your mind?” Hank asked.

“Nowhere, man.”

Git along little doggies, git along. What is a doggie?

Bill pokes the fire with a branch. I could kill Hank he thinks. I don’t like him. He’s conceited. He’s too big for his britches. Sure, he’s been in a couple of B movies over at Warner Brothers but so what. I’m a better actor, have a broad chest and a bigger dick. We compared once. I could get the hatchet from the backpack and brain him in the back of the skull like chopping wood. It’s not just a cutthroat industry, it’s soul-destroying and skull-splitting. That’s no matter. I crossed over at the bend in the river a long time ago. The imagination is center stage now. It can take you from the city where it is geometric, grey, maze-like, corridorred, behind doors in cabinets in hidden toilets where the Encyclopedia of Secrets is stored.

Bill and Hank took shots at an old lion but missed. It galloped toward them with its magnificent gold mane flying like a pennant and enormous head and fearsome roar like the pictures and its fathomless eyes where one cannot go. Lion pawed them with paws the size of a catcher’s mitt and her claws razored their flesh into thick strips of steak. She bit off their heads

and masticated their genitals and gnawed on their jug-like thighs from decades of fruitless jogging in Spandex and spat out their marinated livers.

They were less tasty than they should have been, thought Lion, but bad living is always betrayed in the meat.