

# **THE HARDCASE SPEAKS**

**Stephen King**

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## From Contraband #2

In fields and christless allies the psalter is handed  
greedily around with purple bottles of cheap port  
punctuated by the sodium lightness glare of freights  
rising past hobo cinder gantries and pitless bramble hollows:  
Dukane, Grand Rapids, Cedar Forks, Harlow, Dover-Foxcroft,  
names from the back platform of the A-train  
so don't gimme that shit don't gimme that crap  
I'll put the hoodoo on you, I can do it, it comes in a can  
in 1954 in a back alley behind a bar they  
found a lady cut in four pieces and written in her juice on the bricks  
above  
he had scrawled PLEASE STOP ME BEFORE I KILL AGAIN in  
letters that leaned and  
draggled so they called him The Cleveland Torso Murderer and  
never caught him,  
it figures  
all these liberals are brainless

if you want to see jeans just peak into any alabaster

gravel pit in Mestalinias

all these liberals have hairy shirts

Real life is in the back row of a 2nd run movie house in Utica, have  
you been

there

this guy with his hair greased back was drunk

and getting drunker when I sat down and his face kept twisting; he  
cried I'm a

goddamn stupid sonofabitch but doan choo try to tell me nothin I  
didn't he

might have come from Cleveland

if the stars are right I can witch you I can make your hair fall out

You don't need hairy jeans to stand outside a Safeway

store in Smalls Falls and watch a cloud under the high

blue sky ripple the last shadows of summer over the asphalt parking  
lot two

acres wide

A real hack believes blackboards are true

for myself I would turn them all soft like custard scoop

them feed them to blackbirds save corn for murderers

in huge and ancient Buicks sperm grows on seatcovers

and flows upstream toward the sound of Chuck Berry

once I saw a drunk in Redcliff and he had stuffed a newspaper in his  
mouth he

jigged jubilantly

around a two shadowed light pole

I could gun you down with magic nose bullets

There are still drugstore saints

Still virgins pedalling bikes with playing cards affixed to the rear  
spokes

with clothespins

The students have made things up

The liberals have shit themselves and produced a satchel-load of  
smelly

numbers

Radicals scratch secret sores and pore over back numbers

bore a little hole in your head sez I insert a candle

light a light for Charlie Starkweather and let

your little light shine shine shine

play bebop

buy styrofoam dice on 42nd street

eat sno-cones and read Lois Lane

Learn to do magic like me and we will drive to Princeton

in an old Ford with four retread skins and a loose manifold that boils  
up the

graphite stink of freshcooked

exhaust we will do hexes with Budweiser pentagrams and old

Diamond matchboxes

chew some Red Man and let the juice down your chin when you spit

sprinkle sawdust on weird messes

buy some plastic puke at Atlantic City

throw away your tape player and gobble Baby Ruths

Go now. I think you are ready.