

PARALEGAL

C.B. Anderson

So many people have betrayed
My trust, I almost don't know where to start.
So many deals I lately made
Have been consigned to overflowing dustbins,
It's time I raised my voice. It breaks my heart,
But I indict my brothers and my cousins,
My statutory lovers too,
My closest friends, including you.

My brother found his perfect boat,
And I agreed it was a splendid craft
And furthermore agreed to float
A loan enabling him to soon possess it;
But when I asked him to repay, he laughed
And fed me hot dogs from a Boy Scout mess kit,
His method for reminding me
Of his abysmal poverty.

My cousin thinks I should support
Him. When I do, it's never quite enough,
And when I don't, he begs the Court
To grant the services of an attorney
Appointed by the state. Their firm rebuff
Forever fails to set him on the journey
Toward laudable upstanding ends
Or any plan to make amends.

My former wife rolled into town
And sued to get her alimony raised
Because she thought I was a clown
Who'd pay. I told her I'd retained a lawyer
Much better than my first—she'd be amazed
How good he was, how quickly he'd destroy her
With witnesses who would attest
To all the times they'd fouled her nest.

My current wife looks good in heels
And wears them while she makes attempts to woo
Me with a host of special meals.
She promises a life of culinary
Delight (as many wives have sworn to do),

But sadly, food she serves just isn't very
Enjoyable. An artful cook
Is not a butcher with a book.

And you, the one I trusted most,
Invited me to ogle handsome girls
Imported from our western coast.
At first I was unable to accredit
My eyes—the cleavage, tiny waists, and curls
Of homespun gold—so then you went and said it
Was only an alluring show
To make me think, but never know.

An injured man like me gains less
From claiming damages in civil court
Than malefactors who confess
Their crimes, expecting a suspended sentence—
A breach of contract or a grievous tort
Counts little next to spurious repentance.
I seem to have an aptitude
For reaching out and getting screwed.

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