

BUKOWSKI: I didn't do it, no. I felt like doing it. I'm a potential rapist, but I know that I can't get away with it. It doesn't pay off. If I raped the kid, where do I end up? I don't get any ass for 15 years, right?

HUSTLER: If it weren't for the law, is it fair to say that you would have raped that little girl?

BUKOWSKI: The only thing I would have against it would be if she didn't want it too much, if it destroyed her mind. It's the matter of consent. The terror put in a small child's mind by some big creature grabbing her and forcing something inside of her—that could destroy her forever.

HUSTLER: Do you think an eight-year-old can make a decision about sex?

BUKOWSKI: I think lots of eight-year-old girls are hornier than I am. If it just worked OK, I would have nothing against it—I mean outside of the law.

HUSTLER: But they're not even sexual creatures.

BUKOWSKI: I don't know when they become sexual. Some become sexual before others, you know. And they're all teases. If you've hung around eight-year-olds, yeah, they tease. They say, "Don't look at my behind," and things like that. Let me give you an illustration. You know I'm a window peep freak.

HUSTLER: Are you a peeping tom?

BUKOWSKI: No, not really. I was just trying to give you an edge there. The lawn in front of my apartment is very interesting. I got up to pour myself a beer, and there were two little girls standing there. One of them was the child that had been pestering me. She came to my door, and it was all hell for me to say, "No, you can't come in, my daughter isn't here anymore." [Bukowski's daughter was born in 1964.] But before she came to my door there was a scene outside on the steps across the way. The other little girl was saying to the one who was bothering me, "There's nothing wrong with having babies. When a man does things to you, it only makes babies." And the other one responded by pulling up her dress and slapping her ass with a newspaper. That's very endearing. I mean, she's almost lost to experience.

HUSTLER: Do you think that was instinctive or learned behavior?

BUKOWSKI: I can't answer that. I'm not inside of her body, so I can't tell you.

HUSTLER: Would you let an eight-year-old make a decision in terms of crossing the street or a crowded highway?

BUKOWSKI: I'd let her suck my dick if she wanted to, but I don't know about crossing the street. Crossing the street and getting fucked are two different things.

HUSTLER: You said that consent was

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what counts here, and consent means that the eight-year-old child is capable of making such a decision. If that child doesn't have the intellectual ability to figure out how to cross the road, would she have the facility to make a decision about fucking?

BUKOWSKI: Probably. If she's ready for sex, she knows more about sex than crossing the road; it comes to her earlier. Somehow, the younger you are the more you know.

Age has nothing to do with knowledge. When my daughter was five, before she went to school, I'd sit around with her and say, "What is death?" She would tell me. I could get the answer right now, and it was perfect. She'd sit and think and she would tell me everything like she had some knowledge beyond. Then she went to kindergarten, and she came to me and said, "Hey, you want to hear a riddle?" She lost her mind when she went to school.

HUSTLER: Do you mean that you could have a meaningful sexual relationship with a little kid?

BUKOWSKI: Hell, no. It's not possible to have a meaningful sexual relationship with a child. It's just a one-night stand.

HUSTLER: Why did you end your story *The Fiend* with the protagonist getting beaten up by the police?

BUKOWSKI: I guess I got a little bit moralistic, and I don't like cops too much. I wanted to get some sympathy for the rapist. You can't ever say why you write this, or why you write that. You just write it. If you know why you're writing something, you're not a good writer. You're something else—a psychologist, or a professor of English.

HUSTLER: What about the social taboos, the overwhelming public disapproval of such an act? You know that part of our justification for publishing your story is that information like this should be explored and recognized, though neither we nor society approve of this kind of behavior.

BUKOWSKI: They think because I write a story about a guy raping a little girl that I condone that act. I don't condone that act, unless it occurs under certain conditions. And the conditions in the story weren't OK. It's like I told you earlier, I'm interested in what goes on in the minds of people who do things a little bit differently than we do—they

eat Baby Ruth candy bars, they wipe their asses when they shit. I want to explore the minds of people who do things that I basically dislike. I want to know what's going on inside their heads while they're doing it, so maybe I will know more.

HUSTLER: You must think about rapists a lot. You can get into their heads so well.

BUKOWSKI: I don't think too much. The less you think, the more you know. One time, somebody asked me what's the secret to typing, and I told them, don't try. That's the secret to everything: Don't try.

HUSTLER: That could lead to a lot of days, weeks, months or years just sitting in front of a typewriter with nothing happening.

BUKOWSKI: I sit in front of a pussy, or in front of a racing form. I don't just sit in front of a typewriter.

HUSTLER: You fear fucking an eight-year-old girl because you'd go to jail, but you can write about it because that allows you to live out your fantasy and get off on it.

BUKOWSKI: To an extent, you're right. But to another extent I'm trying to get into the other man's mind, seeing what he's trying to think while he watches "I Love Lucy" in his spare time. You see, everybody is human, all too human. I have no apologies for my writing. I have no meaning. My writing has no meaning. It has no moral aspect, it has no social aspect.

HUSTLER: The cops beat the shit out of the guy in *The Fiend*. How can you say that there's no moral?

BUKOWSKI: Because cops beat the shit out of guys.

HUSTLER: Did the cops ever beat the shit out of you?

BUKOWSKI: They wanted to once, but they didn't have the guts.

HUSTLER: What stopped them?

BUKOWSKI: My insanity. I was in "the drunk tank at Lincoln Heights, and there was a little guy laying up against the bars. He had a necktie on and was properly dressed. You could tell he had lots of money. He kept saying, "Oh, God, let me put in another dime. I want to call my mother." I said, "You little cocksucker, your mother will come and get you. Stop weeping against the jail bars, you little candyass shit." He kept saying, "Oh, I'm hurt. I'm hurt inside." I said, "We all hurt, motherfucker." For some reason, the guard took umbrage at my attack against this weak child of future wealth. So the guard came up and said, "Hey, man, do you know what we do to guys like you? Two or three of my buddies come in here, and we kick the living shit out of guys like you." I was much younger then, and better built. I started yelling, "Come in here, I beg you, come in here." I ripped my shirt all to shreds, ripped my undershirt to

shreds and kept yelling, "Come on in here. Bring five, bring ten, bring 50. The more the better!" They didn't want any part of me because they knew that I was completely insane. It got silent, and the guard just walked away. I bluffed them out of it.

HUSTLER: OK. But the character in *The Fiend* doesn't bluff the police. He gets beaten up and punished at the end of the story. Wouldn't a psychologist say that that was your way of dealing with your guilt feelings, your need to punish yourself for wanting to violate that child?

BUKOWSKI: Psychologists will destroy creativity. Never analyze. You just go ahead and do. Analysis is a killer.

HUSTLER: What makes you think that a story like *The Fiend* is art?

BUKOWSKI: Something about the way it's written. It's written cleanly, and it takes no sides.

HUSTLER: It takes no sides, but you say a lot of people have mentioned that it turns them on.

BUKOWSKI: It's not my fault that they get hard-ons.

HUSTLER: Did you jerk off after you wrote that story?

BUKOWSKI: I jerked off before I wrote it. I became that man at that time. That does not mean that I say he's right or wrong.

HUSTLER: You say you don't approve of this action, but, by your own admission, you became the rapist in your mind and mentally committed an act that you disapprove of.

BUKOWSKI: But it's not the same thing.

HUSTLER: Agreed. Jerking off is not rape.

BUKOWSKI: I wish I'd said that.

HUSTLER: Which do you think is better—masturbation or getting laid? The woman or the hand?

BUKOWSKI: It depends upon the lay. Generally it depends on how you use your imagination. I would have to say that, except for one or two women I've had, masturbation has been better than the woman.

HUSTLER: Are you saying fantasy is better than reality?

BUKOWSKI: Yeah, right. You have all the situations. You're raping her on an elevator, or something like that. One of my favorite scenes is: I rape a woman in front of the post office with 12 guys watching, who say, "Oh, this is horrible, but let's not call the cops." I guess I'm messed up, but I've always followed my mess-ups. I never tried to correct them. I'm not trying to be normal or OK, I want to be whatever I am.

HUSTLER: You have a story that you wrote especially for us called *The Big Dope Reading* about your sexual escapades at a reading you did in Florida, which will prob-

I've tried to fuck panties, but high-heeled shoes are better.

ably appear in the March issue. There's a scene in it in which your protagonist is fucking a shoe. Is that something that you actually did?

BUKOWSKI: Yeah. This schoolteacher really turned me on, and after she left, I was still horny. Hangovers make me very horny. My body's heated up and I want to do something, maybe to escape the hangover, or to prove I'm alive. She left and there was a shoe sitting there, and it looked so nice in the sunlight. It had a high heel, so I did it.

HUSTLER: Wasn't it uncomfortable?

BUKOWSKI: No. It slides in; you work it out. A shoe man knows how to do these things.

HUSTLER: Are you a shoe man?

BUKOWSKI: Oh, yeah, I love high heels. They drive me crazy. Especially when they're black with the long, spiked heels.

HUSTLER: Would you explain to me what the attraction for shoes is? It's something that eludes me.

BUKOWSKI: Well, I've never analyzed it. I guess, basically, you think of the woman walking around in those shoes. A high-heeled shoe does something extra for a woman's ass. It juts it up and makes it wobble.

HUSTLER: You didn't fuck her ass. You fucked her shoe.

BUKOWSKI: But you're thinking of her ass while you're doing it to the shoe, you see.

HUSTLER: Do you get turned on by looking at shoe ads? Shoe boxes?

BUKOWSKI: I get turned on looking at Frederick's ads when they have shoes in them—you know, little frilly things. I guess I'm a retarded sex fiend of some kind.

HUSTLER: Is there any other strange thing that you fuck that we might be interested in?

BUKOWSKI: Well, I've tried to fuck panties, but somehow I get halfway through and I say, "Aw, this is ridiculous," and throw them on the floor.

HUSTLER: Fucking panties is ridiculous, but fucking a shoe is not?

BUKOWSKI: No, the shoe has it over the panties. God, this interview's not going to make it.

HUSTLER: Between child rape and the shoe fucking, we're doing fine.

BUKOWSKI: Well, I did. I actually did. I fucked one shoe, and I threw it down right

before I reached climax. I don't think I was quite in love with that shoe. Then I went into the closet and found a pair of panties and worked out on that a while. I found another shoe with a higher heel than the shoe I'd discarded, and I worked out on that. Finally, I threw it on the floor and said, "I don't love you, bitch." I saved my sperm because I knew I'd need it. This all occurred in Tallahassee, Florida, and there's something about doing a reading down South. Southern hospitality actually exists. Every time you do a reading in Arkansas, Florida, or somewhere, you get laid. They just arrange it. You go north, they want your autograph. You go south, they want your cock. I prefer doing readings in the South.

HUSTLER: Does your writing attract a lot of literary groups?

BUKOWSKI: Women knock at my door. In the early part of my life, I didn't have very much sex because I was working at cheap jobs or bumming around the country. I'm making up for it now at this end. The girls are getting younger and more beautiful and more intelligent. If they want to go to bed with me, if they want to stay two or three weeks, do the dishes and get drunk with me, I feel it's my just due—I've got it coming.

HUSTLER: You had a very repressed or inactive sexual life prior to your success as a writer?

BUKOWSKI: Yeah, I think I first got myself laid when I was 24-years-old—a 300-pound whore.

HUSTLER: What happened? How did you suddenly change from an inactive, or repressed person, to an imaginative, kinky person?

BUKOWSKI: Well, you know I'm not a pretty man. I have this *acne vulgaris*, and I thought women wouldn't accept a man who didn't look good. But I found out something about women: They are strong. If they know you care, they don't give a damn if you have three arms or no legs. They don't care if you look like a goldfish. I've changed my opinion of women. They are very strong and wonderful creatures.

HUSTLER: Is that why you write about them?

BUKOWSKI: Women are things that start the flame in your gut. They're something to drive you crazy. They take the drabness out of life. You wait for the phone, or she walks by, but she doesn't come to your door. Without women, what the hell would there be? Nothing. Women are the world's greatest invention—outside of me.

HUSTLER: Do you have a picture with you of Cupcakes, your present girlfriend?

BUKOWSKI: My Cupcakes, she's driving me crazy now. She's wonderful. She can

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