



OSMOND ARNESTO

Interview with Osmond Arnesto

THE BACON REVIEW

TBR: Let's literature for a spell. Have to change gears. Do you like comics?

Actually, yes. Not the most hardcore fan, though. I couldn't tell you every author Batman's gone through. Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* is at the top of the list though. *Swamp Thing*. *Watchmen*..

TBR: 'The most hardcore fan' -- you are of:

That's a tough one. I'd say I'm spread a little thinly interest-wise. Movies, music, theater. Not very much room for specialization. Or commitment if you like a cynical connotation to things. There's somewhat of a thing for the James Bond flicks though.

TBR: Particular favorites in that arena? the bond-age? more interested in your villain-of-choice than

Bond-of choice..

Christopher Walken can do no wrong in my eyes. And as Max Zorin you got about as 1980's overdone as you could get. We're talking mustache twirling with a bloody heroin needle with Duran Duran playing in the background overdone.

TBR: I listed that Fatboy Slim video as artistic inspiration just days ago. Awesome. Where are you writing, now, and generally?

If I could dance like that man, half of my problems would be solved. When the writing's good, it's happening in the blurry space between late night and early morning. Whether it's a parking lot structure or a campus computer lab - or more recently my friend's apartment - keystrokes and the odd bump in the night get to be my only soundtrack if I can help it.

TBR: So dashing through underlighting, scribbling in corners with no sound. What keeps you occupied during those hours when you aren't putting pen to pape?

Or pixel to LCD screen? Well sometimes I think I'm Bob Dylan when I strap on a guitar and a harmonica. There's always the odd job that I try to run into on craigslist, and there have been plenty of those - babysitting, yard work, moving services. If you know anyone who could use a hand... and then there's the driving. I don't know if night driver is an actual thing - it's definitely a Tom Petty song - but it's a habit. L.A., Fresno, San Fran. My car's got miles.

TBR: Hence meetings with older black dudes in cafes. Lived in California for awhile?

I chuckle at how it sounds taken out of context like that. Southern California born, raised, and ever looking north and east.

TBR: Tried Colorado yet? Sampled our delicious scenery and good natured smiles?

Farthest I've gone yet is the Grand Canyon. Twenty hour round trip, all to look at what amounts to a massive hole in the ground for half an hour. Don't get me wrong, though - it's awe inspiring. The Rockies though, they're on the list.

TBR: Last meal you had?

Steak and potatoes about two hours ago. Last night's leftovers. One hell of a cook, if I can toot my horn for a bit. Being single for a while will do that to you, if I can un-toot it.

TBR: Ha. Un-tooted. The perks of being a celibate. Guess we can go focused on the story you gave us: where and what is Gorman?

Gorman. It's way too small to be a town. Village sounds antiquated. Community? That sounds right. The 5 runs right through it, and there's this Hollywood-esque lettering on the side of a hill telling me that GORMAN is just ahead. There's a lot more to it than food stops and the Chevron across from the 76, but I couldn't tell you much past that.

TBR: Were you driving anywhere with destination when you ran into Cor___? or were you driving at all, I suppose, would be a lead question

You know usually I don't have much of a reason to get out of wherever I'm sleeping at the time other than

the overwhelming need to just go and chase something I can't name. But this particular trip, chasing romantic interests, I think it could be safely said.

TBR: In my head, you look like Ryan Gosling. A picture is worth ... fourteen words

That's how many you've got to describe your physical self. Ready. Go.

Small, perky breasts and legs that go on for miles. I've been waiting years to answer that question like that for years now. Couldn't resist.

TBR: Got a laugh. Congratulations. Have you ever been interviewed before?

I feel accomplished. I took an acting for the camera class last summer. The professor sort of used an interview as a way to introduce everyone to everybody else, as well as getting us comfy in front of that black void of an eye they call a camera. I don't know if job interviews count.

TBR: Sure. What sort-of car do you snuggle your small perky b's into?

Hah. Toyota Corolla. 2008. More kind on mileage than the 1995 Mazda MPV was. As well as ego. Friends used to call that thing the rapist van. Now I'm just stuck with the car every college student gets.

TBR: Let's call it .. three more questions. That gives you minutes to dawdle on them, like a djinni. Hmmm. The first is a prompt: you've swallowed a mouse, the question is less about what to do about it and more what do you do with the upset woman banging on your hotel door?

'Dawdle like a djinni.' I sense some poetic tendencies. First off, I'd bless my lucky stars that it isn't the woman's upset husband banging on the hotel door this time. Second order of business is looking through the peephole. If she's got a blunt instrument of any kind I'm thinking *exits*, for I am a fragile flower and the two-story drop might lodge the mouse out of my throat if it doesn't kill me outright. If not, it wouldn't hurt too much to open the door. And if it does, hell, I like it rough.

TBR: Well said. The second is as dry as it comes. Publishing: why do you give the pieces you give, do

you give them often, and until what age do you think you'll continue to share them?

Someone asked me once why I drove around so much, gas prices being what they are. And I didn't have an answer for them at that moment. I still don't. But I know that once I find whatever it is that I'm looking for on the road then I can stop. Writing feels the same. I don't know what I'm trying to say but I'll keep going until I run out of words. Or money and food, whichever comes first. And even then I'd like first rights to my headstone. As for the why, I think about a lot of my pieces as tributes. It's tough, telling people things. Of course I could just go ahead and do that, but I don't.

TBR: Good. I put on the *Drive* soundtrack for this last question. *Under your Spell / Desire* – song / artist.

You've got a dollar, and walk into a gas station. Some friends are paying for gas, even though you usually drive alone, even though you know you can't afford anything because of tax. You put the dollar on that thing you'd take with you and leave without it. what is it?

I like that question. The dollar gets wrapped around

a lighter. I don't smoke. I keep one in the car though. Something to flick when the thoughts are running. Something like gamblers with chips or alcoholics with bottles. I can't keep it, but it'll give someone else fuel for their vice. Whatever makes the road smoother for you.

TBR: Thanks for the lighter, the chat,

Thanks for having me. To close: if I looked like Ryan Gosling, that would take care of the other half of my problems.

TBR: Look like Ryan, dance like Chris W.