

ANTIGONE IN NEW YORK

by Janusz Glowacki

Flea, a Polish immigrant, homeless and destitute, 40–50
Thompson Square Park, NYC
Seriocomic

Years of living on the streets of New York and alcohol abuse have driven Flea to the edge of madness. Here, he describes his own vision of the American Dream.

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FLEA: *(Holds up hands and sits back down.)* Okay. Okay. Don't get excited. *(Takes a long swig.)* You know what? You're right. You should go back to Russia where you belong because you'll never make it here. I would never leave New York myself, not for nothing. They couldn't drag me away from this place. *(Takes a sip.)* Because I know how to live in America. I read the papers. I keep up and I know exactly what to do. When I hit the bottom then I will quietly walk to one of these fancy detox centers. Look at Larry Fortensky. He's as Polish as me. He likes to have a drink and now the whole world admires him. If he didn't drink who would he be? No one would have heard of him. He would be in the construction business, painting apartments. And look what happened to him. He was drinking like a good Pole and then he slowly floated to the bottom. Maybe he had a little delirium or a little epilepsy. Anyway, he went to a very elegant detox center and who is detoxing in the next room. Elizabeth Taylor and look. From one day to the next Fortensky's lying in a hammock just rocking back and forth, birds are singing, palms are waving, Michael Jackson is dancing around, some turtles, snakes, maybe some cats. Who the [redacted] knows? And Liz Taylor is tiptoeing around bringing him Wibrova with grapefruit juice. Because the most important thing in life is to be yourself. *(Another long swig.)*

AVEN'U BOYS

by Frank Pugliese

Ed, a young man trapped on the violent streets of Bensonhurst
Bensonhurst, Brooklyn
Dramatic

Driven to despair by his participation in the racial murder of a black teenager, Ed here makes the best confession that his denial will permit.

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ED: Forgive me Father for I have sinned. It's been fifteen years since my last confession. Look I ain't in one of these phone booths since my dad died on the F train. Wuz gonna take me to the Yankee game, World Series, ya know what?

He had a heart attack at Union Square. Pencils in his hands. They thought he was asleep. They didn't try to wake him till the train yards. . . .

The paper said it was tragic—had my glove and sandwiches ready. It was all set. Ain't no God I figured if I can't even see a World Series game—waited for hours for 'im, but Dad never showed. . . .

I got the sweats Father. Wake up with a nightmare. Everybody gets 'em I guess, maybe it's the year for 'em or somethin'. But mine got whips and stuff. Painful. I get it while I'm foolin' around too. All I wanna do half the time is puke. I don't get it Father. Hey, anybody call you Dad. . . .

My wife, I can't look her in the face without a knot in my stomach. It hurts when I see her. Sometimes, she looks so sad. . . .

She wants a kid. I think it's an excuse to screw. I look at kids, they look weird to me, like they come from another planet. . . .

It ain't bad to get crazy, it's just the way people is. . . .

She says you can help me. She's got a good heart. Can you help me? Ah, what the [redacted] do you know. Father McGrail used to take my hand and whip it till it bled. All you priests, always whippin' me for something. . . .