



**A
SPARROW
CAME DOWN
RESPLENDENT**

STUART ROSS

POEMS

OTHER BOOKS BY STUART ROSS

A Hamburger in a Gallery

Further Confessions of a Small Press Racketeer

Our Days in Vaudeville

(with 29 collaborators)

You Exist. Details Follow.

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Dead Cars in Managua

I Cut My Finger

Confessions of a Small Press Racketeer

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The Inspiration Cha-Cha

The Mud Game

(with Gary Barwin)

The Pig Sleeps

(with Mark Laba)

Guided Missiles

Smothered

Wooden Rooster

Father, the Cowboys Are Ready to Come Down from the Attic

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A Buckrider Book

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ADUL AND THE MAGIC BOOK

Young Adul is sitting in the field reading a book. The book is about a young boy who sits in a field and reads a book. The sun is hot. From somewhere in the village trickles the faint sound of music. Adul's father plays a horn. Suddenly the book goes dark. At first Adul thinks he forgot to charge it and it has run out of electricity. Then he remembers the village has no electricity and his books are made of paper. Therefore it is just that he has been obliterated by a bomb that missed the village. He knows the village has survived because he still hears the music. Adul flaps his arms and rises into the air. He passes some neighbouring countries, then finds himself over the ocean. Soon he is landing in the United States of America. There are big moving pictures stuck on the sides of buildings that are taller than the tallest tree that Adul has ever seen. The streets are filled with cars and trucks. There are neither animals nor plants. Children travel by jetpacks and their books run on batteries. Soon Adul arrives at an armament

factory. He is so small
the man at the door doesn't see
him brush by his knees. Inside
a man is at a desk. Adul peers
up at him and says, "Can you
unmake the bomb you dropped
on me so I can finish reading
my book? Also, I have to clean
out the hens' cage or my mother
will be unhappy." To the man
behind the desk, Adul's language
sounds like a crazy chimpan-
zee. In a country to the north
that Adul has never heard of
his language would sound like
a chimpanzed. I have placed
a cheap joke in a poem about
the death and misery caused
by Western imperialism. To
compensate, I will make Adul
alive again, sitting in his field,
reading his book to its very
end before he tends to
the hen droppings. He has
never flown. He has never
seen a building higher than
two storeys. In the distance,
he hears the music of his
father's horn. I open a beer.
Suddenly my beer goes dark.