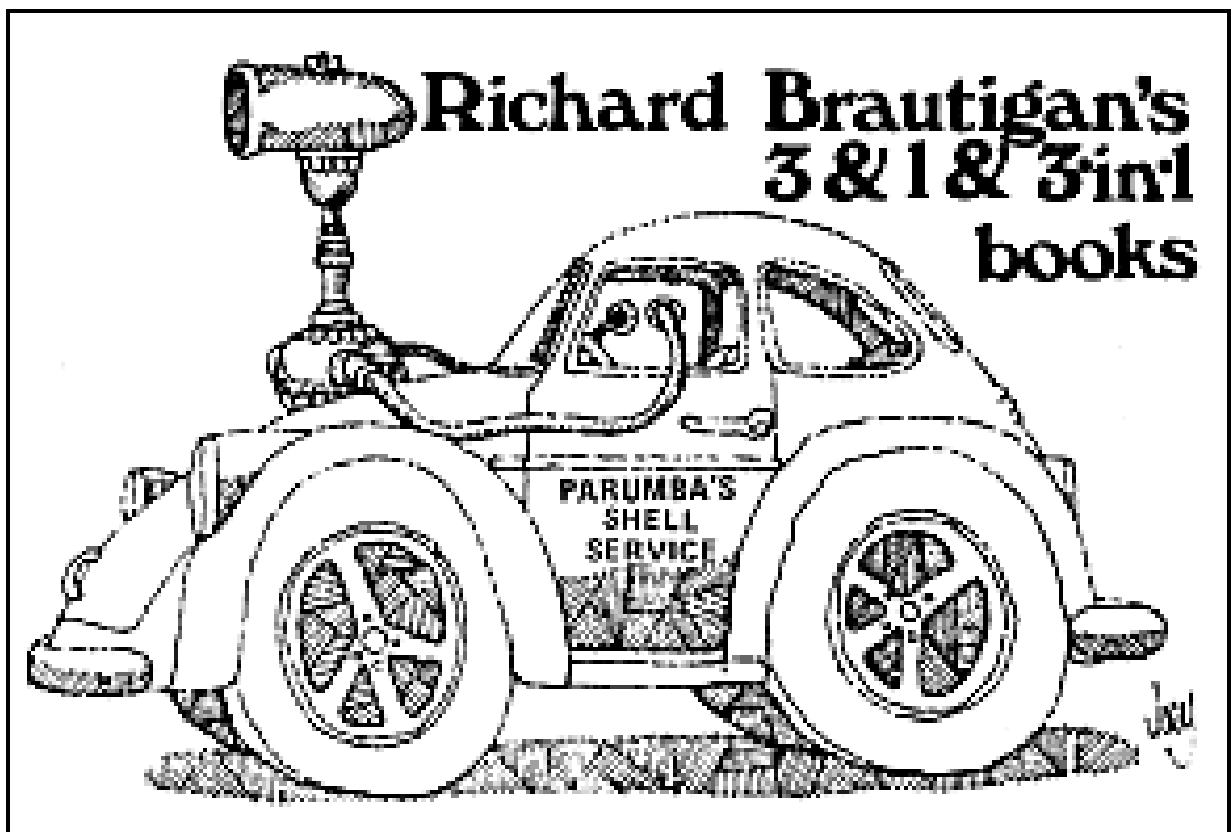


Richard Brautigan's 3 & 1 & 3-in-1 Books

Arthur Parumba

1969



O.K. now, I got to tell you about what I am writing about. It is 3 books and another one, and I guess, another one. They are called *Trout Fishing in America*, *The Pill versus The Springhill Mine Disaster*, *In Watermelon Sugar* and all three of them together (they cost about 2 dollars each in paperback or you can buy (ed. note: steal) all three of them together in hardcover for about 8 dollars. All from Delacorte Press, I guess, and *The Confederate General from Big Sur* (a buck ninety five from Grove Press) and they were all written by Richard Brautigan who is a crazy man.

Well, anyway, let me tell you what happened. You see, I run this gas station, and I'm not a hippy or anything like that but, well, I guess I can say it here, see I smoke a little stuff now & then cuz it is fun and I like to and I have

a friend who is nuts kind of and well he gets me the stuff some time. Well, you see, one day he came to Parumba's Shell Station (whooppee, free advertising) and had some weed & this book about trout fishing he wanted me to read so I went home (I don't read very much, mostly just the sports page but I fish down at the river, behind Cobo Hall once in a while and catch a few sheepshead now & then, & maybe a silver bass so I thought I'd read this book & maybe I'll like it) so I went home & smoked the weed & turned on the T.V. but the game wasn't on & I was fucked up, I mean, really Fucked Up & I couldn't think of anything to do so I ate some food & called up Sue (she gives) but she wasn't home so I went to bed, Fucked Up, & Then I remembered the book so I went to bed wearing my Shell pajamas with Artie written across the pocket. Just me, my PJs, & this crazy guy's book.

WOW

I really liked this book, I didn't understand it very much cuz it was really crazy but I like it & I laughed a lot & the whole things funny & about half way through my high started to wear off but another took its place & I couldn't believe it cuz I WAS FUCKED UP FROM READING A BOOK, I finished the book about three hours later & fell asleep with my toes smiling, and my stomach smiling, & my face was smiling too, & my bed, & my pajama's were smiling, a people were dying in Viet Nam with smiles on their faces, a cars were smiling as the crashed into one another & THE WHOLE FUCKING WORLD WAS SMILING AS HARD AS IT COULD. that's what I dreamed & that's what I knew.

So, the next day at work my friend came in again & he said how did you like the weed & I said Nelson, that's his name, I said Nelson, the weed was good & that book was great, Great, GREAT, GREAT!!! & he just smiled & said he'd bring me another one.

and two days later he did. And it was called *The Pill Versus the Springhill Mine Disaster* & it wasn't a story like the other one. It was poetry, & I told Nelson that (don't ever call him Nellie, cuz he will smash your head in if you do) and he said, yep, that's poetry all right but read it anyway & so I did & it wasn't like the poetry they made me read in school but it was good, I mean I liked it & it made sense to me & some were like on a trip & then some were real real, I mean about real things, like fucking, & VD, & getting high & catfish & it was good too & I liked it but I wouldn't want to read it for the rest of my life & I told that to my friend & he said OK, then read this one & it was about a town called Watermelon Sugar & it was so funny that I almost died laughing & I even cried in one part cuz it was sad & they were bad guys & good guys, & the good guys got all the broads & the bad guys were weird & everything worked out almost all right & I knew that it would & it's another good book for you to read if you like fun things.

Anyway I found out this guy only has one more book that you can buy & it's about living in the woods, & alligators & frogs so I asked Nelson to get it for me & he did & It's as good as *Trout Fishing in America*, the best thing I ever read, I mean it's a tie & everybody will like it & I read the fishing book and *The Confederate General from Big Sur* both four times now & they're both so good that even smart people will like them

& people like me & everybody cuz they're the best books in the world & I was even going to take a vacation to this Big Sur place cuz I want to meet Lee Mellon & Jesse (they are the stars of this book) & ask them to come back to Detroit & work in my gas station cuz they'd be fun & if you can't come with me, then at least read the book read all 4 of them & tell everybody to read them & everybody will stop fighting cuz they'll know what the books mean & if you are not sure if you want to read these books, come by my gas station & I'll tell you some more.

I made all the people who work there read them including Jimmy who was the meanest baddest motherfucker you ever seen & after he read them he started smiling a lot & I went away for a weekend last month & when I came back my gas station was all painted orange & blue & green & I found out Jimmy is the one who did this & everybody I know who has read these books is happy & even my gas station smiles now & everything is shiny, even the rest rooms & you'll always be happy & you can't get busted for reading his books yet & if you don't read them I'll come looking for you with a smile on my face, & with my gentle gun & I'll shoot you full of gentle bullets.

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