

**monsoon**books

UNHOOKING A DD-CUP  
BRA WITHOUT FUMBLING

Adam Adams is an Asia-based British lipogram author, whose fetish is to write books that omit a certain letter of the alphabet. He plans one book for each of the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet.

This novel, which is written entirely without the letter E, is his first.

UNHOOKING  
A DD-CUP BRA  
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FUMBLING

ADAM ADAMS



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# A: Introduction

A quick fix:

Dank, mulish stronghold  
Curious duality  
Cryptologist's Holy Grail?

Fortification  
Wintry Arabian nights  
Gnashing portcullis!

Muscular padlock  
Unassailability  
Sultry goad; stay out!

Instant sandstorm swirls  
Antagonist's sly hairpin  
Virtuosity!

Harry Houdini  
Smoking top gun drowns in bag  
Addicts; watch your back

Morris's anonymous buddy said, "Assign only vacant hours to

this task, finish your day's work, sit comfortably with a soothing drink and apply your mind to this conundrum. This can harm nobody, and you may find it fulfilling.”

								2				
		4	4	2	5	4	1	1	5	2	5	
3		P	U	T	R	O	W	T	R	T	S	
3		W	O	I	N	A	M	A	S	D	A	
8	1	J	N	L	N	A	O	A	M	T	G	
5	3	A	S	R	O	M	R	I	S	C	T	
2	2	3	I	O	X	O	A	T	R	D	O	U
2	2	2	O	F	A	G	D	N	S	P	O	S
1	1	1	I	T	I	A	O	N	W	O	R	D

## B: Big Black Ants

Alluring Shannon Dublin skims through a fusty hymnbook,  
 Giving its monotonous lyrics a cursory look  
 of cynical collusion and drowsy complicity  
 until finding a familiar singalong ditty,  
 A striking hymn that brings back childhood nostalgic thoughts  
 Of distraught, spotty choirboys as vocal chords warp and  
 distort.  
 Shannon haphazardly flicks through a musty group of psalms  
 Skipping row upon row of mind-numbing words without  
 qualms,  
 Till spotting a wily conundrum drawn in its margin, causing much  
 chagrin  
 With its stark, spindly handwriting of shocking crimson blood.  
 In shock, Shannon drops this “hot potato” with a dull thud.

- a. Pair up solutions
- b. Add up Xs for pairs and list low pair first and high pair last
- c. Boldly go
- d. Think about it

- 1st X1: Smart Kid (5 3)
- 2nd X2: Bully Train (8)
- 4th X3: Cranium (5)
- 4th X4: Hunt Down (5)
- 7th X5: Random Pick (7)
- 1st X6: Air Tank (8)
- 2nd X7: Falling in Quicksand (7)
- 3rd X8: Fairground Draw (7)

1 <sup>st</sup>	X9: Pornographic Film (4 5)
1 <sup>st</sup>	X10: Fishy Air Pump (4)
5 <sup>th</sup>	X11: Criticism of Action (8)
7 <sup>th</sup>	X12: Sinful Infamous Book (7)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	X13: Hoodlum's Pop Music (3)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	X14: Indoor Shrub (3 5)
1 <sup>st</sup>	X15: Gory (12)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	X16: Drawn out jog (4 3)
8 <sup>th</sup>	X17: Nabs Cain for smoking Grass (8)
1 <sup>st</sup>	X18: Pluck Molar (9)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	X19: Flay (4)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	X20: Aristocratic Batman (7)
4 <sup>th</sup>	X21: Flourishing Municipality (8)
5 <sup>th</sup>	X22: Bomb City in Japan (8)
7 <sup>th</sup>	X23: Olympic Run (8)
5 <sup>th</sup>	X24: Wrist Chains (9)
5 <sup>th</sup>	X25: Spank (5)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	X26: Sick Doctor looking for oil (5)

Bakai Lisaj

Subconsciously, within long-lost catacombs of insight,  
Shannon knows that holding this conundrum up to daylight  
And crisscrossing its labyrinth of bookish contortions  
Has implications of Brobdingnagian proportions.

To Friar Katmandu bland wordplay is compulsory  
Droning on willy-nilly, through his dull oratory,  
A stop-you-in-your-tracks slow train bound for monotony,  
A slashing chainsaw's hack, short of a full lobotomy,  
Caught up in fluffy ball of knitting banality.  
This stout parson fails to spot Shannon's criminality  
As Shannon rips out this book's soul in front of this dullard,  
Folding it up as if an origami bird

It is a long and harrowing story," says Shannon with a faint susurrus murmur through a flimsy partition. "It is as traumatic as matchstick-thin P.O.W. scaffolds building a railroad in Burma."

"What is?" asks Friar Katmandu Junior with gravitas, whilst purloining a Florida "Fast Pass" shufti at Shannon's hypnotic hips and curvy ass via cut-out school-of-dirty-tricks slits in Martyr of Pizzazz's nifty grilling. Shannon's indisputably stunning good looks turbo-boost his faith, a thrilling combination of parabolic contours and undulations that numbs his mind and burns his loins.

This spiritual portcullis was thoroughly thought through by a pragmatic Vatican pontiff way back in 1642. Such ritualistic, kindling partition maintains anonymity, God willing. Whilst you affirm your divinity and undying loyalty to Christ, and to boot it also holds riff-raff at bay. But it isn't a biblical invisibility suit. Solicitous gaps in this grilling allow him to go out on a limb and gawp audaciously at Shannon's cinnamon skin.

"My manuscript . . ." says Shannon as if discussing a fluctuating psychotic phobia.

"It is as if Shannon has had Lara Croft's luscious body flown in by UPS or DHL from Angkor Wat in Cambodia. It is so mind boggling that it blows my brains out as if plum jam spurting from a jam jar," thinks Friar Katmandu Junior, who is known colloquially as J.R.

In stark contrast to Shannon's willowy form, J.R. is a boiling tub of lard. "What kind of manuscript? A schoolboy comic strip or a magnum opus by a classic bard?" asks J.R.

"It's a titillating clunk-click hit-and-run whodunit. It's a Tommy-guns rat-a-tat-tat sounding board, a bandit's shorn-

off-shotgun pursuit of cash from a bank vault. It is a flash-in-a-pan, slap-dash, car crash that wasn't your fault. A whiplash mad dash through long, scintillating paragraphs of yummy, scrumdiddlyumptious words."

"So to cut a long story short, it is totally absurd."

"Statistically, as a sum of its parts, it is a malicious apocalyptic mushroom with a philosophical subplot as multifarious as a Lilo and Stitch cartoon. Splitting hairs, it is both boyishly awkward in its ilk and concomitantly girlish, as smooth as silk. I'm hoping you can assist, though, through analyzing my yarn's individuality, appraising my flight-of-fancy words of wisdom, my funny habits and shadowy Tristram Shandy idiosyncrasy."

"Good lord, that's a tough call. What a to-do. I'm sorry but I cannot scan your book through," says J.R. laboriously.

"Why's that?"

"Prior to his assassination in a black limo in Dallas, JFK said: 'Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country.' I modify this famous diktat to match my appalling and galling calling," says J.R., waxing lyrical with a car-dashboard-nodding-dog bob, as if moralizing from Martyr of Pizzazz's phallic pulpit. "Ask not what your God can do for you but what you can do for your God."

"Look, I'm au fait with your standpoint and your obvious flaws. If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours," says Shannon.

"Whilst it is churlish not to assist, I must stand firm. I'm unworthy. I'm a backbiting slob, not a gluttonous bookworm. I only finish all-consuming books with hypnotic pull-through," says J.R. with gusto. "My bookish capacity stops at Johnny Bravo, Joan of Arc, *Playboy* or Scooby Doo."

"My yarn will drag your thoughts down a familiar path, pointing out profound sights and sounds within taught paragraphs," says Shannon vivaciously, almost audaciously.

"Sights and sounds of which I was unknowingly oblivious or bog-standard tourist traps, stuff that's blindly obvious?" asks J.R. bombastically and not so monastically.

"It will ram what you didn't know you didn't know down your throat. This familiar woodland trail will grind to a jarring halt atop a dizzyingly sharp scarp that it got your goat. From which point onwards, grappling with your prickly morality, you must subconsciously pick which way to go: a nail-biting, out-of-this-world parachuting swoop towards oddity or a painstaking rock climb to a climax of flag-waving banality," says Shannon with a rum-and-raisin grin, starting to think that J.R.'s social standing as a scholarly critic is rubbing a bit thin.

"Shannon, put it this way: I can only assist you if you truly know what you long for, your trailblazing aspirations."

J.R.'s cautionary words hit a chord with Shannon, who motors on with a fanatical narration: "Wow, holy cow; that's it. All I want for Christmas is my two front incisors and rich pickings from my Christmas pudding, a cold-light-of-day cash cow."

"How now brown cow, not so fast you ding-a-ling, you must sing along with a daily dawn chorus, day-in, day-out, to milk cows; it's hard work. No bull; it's laborious. But if you grasp a bull by its horns and shun its vicious ivory thorns, your articulation will throw up unorthodox ways to show an amazing bull run of profit accumulation."

"Funny you say that, for lurking in my babbling book is a baffling hush-hush conundrum that will outfox all and sundry.

Solving this puzzling whodunit will unlock a Fort Knox strongroom door and highlight a path to cryptologist's Holy Grail. My Alan Black, you might say," says Shannon in a conspiratorial way.

"Who's that? Who is Alan Black?"

"Long ago, a British band, Blackpool Rock, brought out a humdrum, so-so pop music album surrounding a crafty vocal conundrum. Think of warring Indians surrounding a cowboy wagon train. Spun backwards this album would prompt you to contact Alan Black in a flashy villa in Madrid, Spain."

"Why? Did you obtain bragging rights and win a fortnight's holiday in sunny Florida with first-class flights?" asks J.R. haughtily, making his small talk small, out of sight out of mind in his plush stall.

"No, it was as disastrous as a World Cup Final own-goal. My stylus wasn't up to scratch, and all I did was hit a snag and scratch my vinyl."

"God knows man. What is doubtful is what man knows God," says J.R. with gusto, unknowingly quoting curious back-to-front lyrics from Blackpool Rock's blog.

"I want a fiscal inflow, a financial windfall for my ability in honing my hard-fought glossary," says Shannon with affability whilst squirming atrociously on a foldaway plastic chair. "I want a fluid cash flow."

"What is so important about hunting high and low to find a rainbow's pot of gold? It's just chasing shadows, you know?"

"A chunky Kohinoor diamond tiara—what would I want that for? But a 'do-not-iron' squishy wad of hard cash will act as insulation from today's day-to-day brash brass-tacks bank loans so I can withdraw far away into a wordy world of my own."

"Withdraw from a bank? What a martyr. Why do you want isolation from inflation?" asks J.R. forthrightly, shooting blanks, scratching his blotchy scalp with dumpy digits whilst looking for clarification.

"Sorry, I cannot hang around gossiping just for fun; this plastic chair is gnawing at my bum. Initially, I was banking on you, but this dank booth is dispiriting and sad," says Shannon, standing up to light a pacifying Marlboro Country fag and taking a 1940s film star's sulky drag.

"That's okay; up sticks with your shaggy dog story and go. It is just tough luck that my borough is hard up, as a painful coccyx is an occupational hazard. You must forgo luxury as my parish is niggardly and haphazard. It lacks funding to fix its roof. Trivial hardships fortify faith," says J.R. aloofly, with a crafty swig of cognac from a chunky hipflask. His spacious sanctum's cozy chair is clad in contradictory "*I'm all right Jack*" lagging. J.R. puffs out his flabby torso as if it is a flapping airport windbag.

"So in fact, dough is important to you, too. Don't you think that's a bit rich?" asks Shannon thinking this through and plopping back down on this nifty plastic foldaway chair.

"What's it to you? It's only fools' gold, a dud toy from a fairground; it won't do much good. I am thrifty and I control my fistful of dollars judiciously," says J.R. with a rush of blood. "Carry on, and I'll stop my boring homily. But gambling my bottom dollar, I'd say your swan-song book talks about mankind, faith and God?" says J.R. from his pastoral idyll whilst habitually tugging at his nipping dog collar bought for a song.

"That sucks; no nothing so archaic. Anyway, I'm agnostic, God is as good as an alarm clock in a mortuary," says Shannon,

bluntly wary that this caustic straight talking is a foot-in-mouth faux pas.

“So why do you want my appraisal of your claptrap?” asks J.R. with an air of irritability, far from happy but skirting around Shannon’s frank proclamation as if it was a mantrap.

“I focus on fornicating arthropods and Thai boxing. As an avid Thai boxing fan, you can add a flagstaff of colors to my bland yarn.”

“Fornicating arthropods! For crying out loud, what in Xanadu is that Kubla Khan?” His jaw drops, for this is horrific; without missing a trick J.R. balloons with artificial jollity, fast-talking Shannon’s oration away from Thai boxing towards frivolity.

“It is that irritating touch of ants walking across your pink skin,” says Shannon with an involuntary convulsion. “If I vomit in church, is that a mortal sin?”

An irrational phobia prompts a jillion hairs on J.R.’s tubby arms to stand up in rows as if a palm oil crop on a Bahamas plantation. “It’s not a mortal sin to throw up in church, but my charlady will go bananas. Sadly, my familiarity with bugs, particularly with an army of big black ants, is insignificant.”

“What humbug!”

“But it’s not; it’s an old maxim that an archaic God and his rituals and incantations might comfort you through thick and thin, if out on a limb,” says J.R. with aplomb whilst scratching at his itchy crotch as his tickly habit rubs his flabby skin.

“What poppycock! I don’t want cold comforts; I want cat-on-a-hot-tin-roof discomfort. I want my paws to burn as if zingy onion rings. I don’t want to hang on to God’s apron strings, as

I’m not an invalid or a timid kid. I look in a mirror at my id and I abhor what gawks back, but I can’t do anything about that. I had a way with words, but now I spray insipid graffiti, scratch banal tattoos and shilly-shally. I should “Hi ho, hi ho, it’s off to work I go,” but I dilly-dally, sitting watching my Ps and Qs. I should do my ablutions, but I slump in disarray, musing in front of my digital TV, watching Captain Kirk, Spock, Doctor McCoy, Scotty and Uhura boldly go in Thai,” scoffs Shannon indignantly.

“A Vulcan grip might snap you out of it. Do you think I should try?” asks J.R., clawing viciously at his stinging rash, knowing that this scratching will bring about a painful backlash.

Shannon laughs, “I’m a blind girl knocking into lasagna stacks of tacky paragraphs. My work is word bound, as if strangling knots of roots in a pot-bound aspidistra. And a good pruning wouldn’t go amiss.”

“A nod is as good as a wink to a blind man. Don’t mix up your ability with that of a Salvation Army missionary.”

“What tommyrot. Put a sock in it, you old windbag, I’m thoroughly happy idling for half an hour. Similar to a dog with no limbs going for a walk, my world is a total drag. I sit in a chronological limbo as if *Waiting for Godot*. If I’m not watchful, I’ll transform into a laughingstock as if an inky dot-to-dot, a prim old maid writing smutty books for my own titillation.”

“It isn’t a mortal sin.”

“What isn’t?”

“Procrastination; thinking back through thick and thin, I admit that I only construct staid orations whilst blissfully slaphappy. Procrastination is a vital tool in writing a work of art,” says J.R., flapping at a moth, which throbs around a dim

thirty-watt bulb.

“How would you know?”

“Tautology is my job. Anguish and paranoia act as catalysts, similar to how a dark room aids a tray of bulbous mushrooms to grow.”

“I lost my way. Waylaid and found in a doorway by a dawn patrol. Misaid, my world is spiraling out of control. I’m in a fix; if I don’t act soon, my mind will fall in, and this implosion will gut my brain of its last iota of *Jim’ll Fix It* dynamism,” says Shannon with a long, drawn-out sigh.

Hitching his habit up high, J.R. rips into his rash with his crucifix on its chunky rap artist’s chain. “What do you want? A *Jim’ll Fix It* airship of a cigar!”

“I wouldn’t go that far. I’m a slothful toad wallowing in a pot of liquid, which slowly boils with a sickly fog rising from its spout. What it boils down to is that I’m too lackadaisical to hop, skip, jump out. My world is inching towards dodgy doldrums of ludicrous proportions, as if a flow of volcanic lava. It is going badly awry, à la global warming or a volcano on Krakatoa in Java. I want to work hard and play hard, but I just bust a gut, as mortality’s hard work,” says Shannon inconsolably, starting to sob.

“It is impractical to sit around doing nothing all day without a nagging guilt about having a mountainous but trivial to-do list,” says J.R. at Shannon’s maudlin histrionics. J.R. yanks his habit back down whilst tugging at his rosary with an iron fist.

“Don’t twist my words around, you bob-a-job snob. “It’s my party and I’ll cry if I want to.” I want to talk to you as a man about town, not as a hip-hop monk, an armchair psychologist, a

trusty confidant or a cardboard cut-out cryptologist.”

“Christ Almighty, what a hullabaloo! Why so high and mighty? I’m sorry for caring about you. Offhand, my quick-win proposition is that you go and say four Hail Marys to our gracious Lord for your trifling sins and run, run as fast you can, back to your Ouija board and your banal library of soppy hogwash,” says J.R. cynically, with a tit-for-tat snarl.

“Thanks, you wishy-washy charlatan. I’m thankful that your impromptu slings and arrows won’t harm my plans. Don’t just bandy words, you maggot; do your worst and stop acting up, you ungodly bigot,” says Shannon, adding insult to injury with a final disparaging outburst. Hopping mad, Shannon storms off through Martyr of Pizzazz’s gothic church in a cloudburst huff-and-puff-and-blow-your-shack-down strop.

An obligatory stain glass window forms a calming backdrop and an air of sanctuary to Martyr of Pizzazz:

A shaft of myopic daylight squints  
Through a fabulous stain glass window.  
A plunging oculus floods through chinks  
In this mosaic’s harrowing halo.  
Carroty sunlight similar to  
Prison garb of Guantanamo Bay  
Spotlights nail-biting pain running through  
Golgotha hill on that Good Friday,  
Profiling Christ’s grim crucifixion,  
Cramping, gasping, slipping unconscious,  
Dying via asphyxiation  
Thanks to hand-washing Pontius.

Or is it you and yours who slyly purloin  
 Judas Iscariot’s costly thirty coins?

Martyr of Pizzazz is out of focus  
 To backpacking batik shirts and sandals.  
 Its glutinous coat of hocus-pocus  
 Masks voodoo black magic, dirty scandals,  
 Contract-killing matrimonial shots  
 Gun down shady marks in cold light of day.  
 Sniping casts shadows on virginal frocks.  
 Mint condition or pay and display?  
 Conjugal rights, oozing bodily fluids,  
 A warm bloodbath of consummating conscripts,  
 Knowing that pagan Glastonbury druids  
 With faith in dark arts and optical tricks  
 Thought that if you lost your shadow you lost  
 Your soul; a burnt-to-toast holocaust.

But it is not all doom and gloom; Martyr of Pizzazz is also a thousand-volt lightning rod for human waifs and strays that acts as a catalyst for a snarling sonic-boom flock of social misfits. It is in fact a fish-bowl microcosm of our multifarious orb.

Shannon grinds to a halt with pouting lips in front of a curiously lit monochromatic motif cut into a low hanging fruit archway. A dancing carnival of souls and grainy Blair Witch shadows play optical tricks, highlighting its top two rows. Without a shadow of doubt this simulacrum daub has haunting implication, but it is as difficult to pin down as Hulk Hogan.

Shannon jots down its topmost two rows, consisting of sixty-

four symbols. “It looks oddly familiar!”

J	S	Z	S	Z	B	A	K	A	I	S	L	T	B	O	M	T	C	L	C	M	G	C	P	I	S	R	O	S	I	K	+
F	G	A	I	O	S	H	I	I	U	B	L	G	T	F	N	H	N	T	N	N	S	O	K	L	L	L	I	S	A	Y	+
M	N	A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	B	S	U	L	H	R	N	T	I	P	C	U	R	D	I	S	I	-
A	P	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	H	H	D	P	V	P	S	B	V	K	O	S	U	S	D	M	A	-
M	2	Z	A	B	C	D	F	D	A	J	J	D	V	H	L	D	O	U	T	K	V	J	I	Z	I	O	N	Y	I	N	-
J	M	A	B	C	D	D	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	Z	A	I	L	R	G	T	W	B	G	L	W	M	A	S	L	T	-
J	3	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	O	I	Q	B	K	S	K	J	O	O	J	B	T	G	N	I	L	-
A	P	Y	Z	A	B	C	D	F	G	J	A	I	J	B	H	J	K	A	G	F	F	I	J	S	U	P	H	D	C	Q	+
S	J	12	31	15	79	6	22	8	7	22	7	22	B	H	Q	P	L	P	Q	M	T	U	F	L	X	C	Q	L	G	V	-
O	H	C	Q	F	F	B	O	I	S	Z	B	I	J	S	D	W	K	M	Z	V	H	S	C	H	A	P	N	I	N	P	-
N	S	G	U	G	C	U	T	C	M	S	I	N	A	I	U	N	O	L	Y	M	R	N	I	D	Z	O	S	C	A	A	-
D	7	11	5	92	57	22	7	16	5	6	10	12	14	20	7	9	8	16	9	15	12	15	16	7	2	92	28	27	86	102	+

“So I’m in your bad books am I? For crying out loud, your sob story is much ado about nothing, isn’t it, you big baby?” scoffs J.R., badmouthing Shannon. “Do my worst! If you insist my fair lady,” rants J.R. with a quizzical, mocking look as Shannon runs off. Pulling up his dowdy cassock and bringing to light not body-hugging pants but a primal Mahatma Gandhi loincloth, J.R. claws wildly at his burning rash. J.R. sits toying with multitudinous *Fatal Attraction* options for ridiculing and humiliating Shannon bubbling in his mind, as if an army of big black ants boiling in a cooking pot.