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Matt Dillon Lili Taylor Marisa Tomei

# fac·tō·tum

*a man who never had a job he liked, and never kept a job he had.*

a novel

# charles bukowski

*Charles Bukowski*

**FACTOTUM**

 HarperCollins e-books

For John & Barbara Martin

The novelist does not long to see the lion eat grass. He realizes that one and the same God created the wolf and the lamb, then smiled, “seeing that his work was good.”

—Andre Gide

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## Epigraph

1

I arrived in New Orleans in the rain at 5 o'clock...

2

I was in a room on the second floor across...

3

I went out on the street, as usual, one day...

4

He was a man behind the desk with a hearing...

5

It was a magazine publishers distributing house and we stood...

6

Monday I was hungover. I shaved off my beard and...

7

We were still in Louisiana. The long train ride through...

8

When the train stopped in Los Angeles we had a...

9

My mother screamed when she opened the door. “Son! Is...

10

My mother had found a job. She was to start...

11

The next day I went back to bed for a...

12

I stayed in my room until after they left the...

13

I woke up in a room. I was alone.

14

That night my father arrived with the thirty dollars. As...

15

I got a job in an auto parts warehouse just...

16

My bill for room, board, laundry, etc., was so high...

17

I had worked long enough to save up bus fare...

18

For four or five days I walked around. Then I...

19

It looked like a deserted store. There was a sign...

20

Two old guys were waiting for me. I met them...

21

The hours at the dog biscuit factory were from 4:30 p.m....

22

After arriving in Philadelphia I found a roominghouse and paid...

23

When I arrived in St. Louis it was very cold,...

24

I found a job as a shipping clerk in a...

25

We were down in a cellar. The walls were painted...

26

Whenever I went out into the hall of the roominghouse...

27

After losing several typewriters to pawnbrokers I simply gave up...

28

I kept hand-printing my short stories. I sent most of...

29

I always walked to my room, it was six or...

30

I often saw Gertrude in the hall. We talked but...

31

When I got back to Los Angeles I found a...

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Her name was Laura. It was 2 o'clock in the...

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When we awakened, Laura told me about Wilbur. It was...

[34](#)

By the time we docked, Grace had joined us too.

[35](#)

Grace, Laura and I were sitting at the bar in...

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Rows and rows of silent bicycles. Bins filled with bicycle...

[37](#)

She was the manager's secretary. Her name was Carmen—but despite...

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We all doubled up as both stock and shipping clerks.

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Jan was an excellent fuck. She'd had two children but...

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I arrived at the bicycle warehouse at 10:30 a.m. Starting...

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I still had my thirty-five dollar car. The horses were...

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We lived on the fourth floor of an old apartment...

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I was too sick one morning to get up at...

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I was finally hired on at an auto parts warehouse.

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The next day at work we were questioned about our...

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We ran through the tunnel as they were putting them...

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The new life didn't sit well with Jan. She was...

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The arguments were always the same. I understood it too...

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At the auto parts warehouse I did less and less.

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I had my winnings and the bookie money and I...

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Jan and I were at Los Alamitos. It was Saturday.

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When I awakened I was sweating. Jan's leg was thrown...

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Miami was as far as I could go without leaving...

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In the morning it was very quiet and I thought,...

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The Florida State Department of Employment was a pleasant place.

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I found a job through the newspaper. I was hired...

[57](#)

I don't know how many weeks I worked there. I...

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I got to my room and took my old pants...

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It took four days and five nights for the bus...

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I got hired immediately at a fluorescent light fixture company.

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Feldman was trying to collect his insurance and go bankrupt...

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I walked into the Times Building. I had taken two...

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I awakened sick the next morning. It had been nearly...

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