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SHIP OF FOOLS

A Masters Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate College of
Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts, English

By
Kevin Grzybowski
May 2017
ABSTRACT

In this collection of stories, the absurd deterritorializes characters, plots, and ideologies throughout a combination of full-length narratives and flash fiction. In the process of reterritorialization, new meaning is added to archetypical narratives (The Bible’s creation myth) and to familiar characters (the impoverished man, the cruel industrialist). Through these narratives, humanity is explored through unconventional means as characters find themselves at odds with supernatural forces, whether it be reincarnation, interaction with deities, or being haunted by the grotesque rat king. While this is a far cry from realism, the absurdism allows the reader unusual ways of seeing the same world.

KEYWORDS: flash fiction, deterritorialization, reterritorialization, absurdism, supernatural

This abstract is approved as to form and content

_______________________________
Mike Czyzniejewski
Chairperson, Advisory Committee
Missouri State University
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Approved:

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Julie Masterson, PhD: Dean, Graduate College
I would like to thank the following people for their support during the course of my graduate studies. To Mike, thanks for making me the writer I’ve become, through the early stories, through the truly awful ones, and the ones that were alright. To Jen, thanks for the wide breadth of knowledge of literature across the years. I’ll forever be indebted to your Contemporary Fiction class that opened the door to the literature that has defined my love of words. You have both taught me how to be an invaluable teacher through your commitments, and I wouldn’t have gotten far without either of you.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ship of Fools: An Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made in China</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Load of Dog Biscuits</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sum of G’Joob’s Small Miracles</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restitution for Teeth</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble in Paradise</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sudden Reappearance of the Rat King</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Goring at the Dinner Show</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battleship, Unsunk</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>