

A River Runs Through It. RFK Jr., The Poet Laureate of Porn Makes His Literary Debut

By Josh Powell | November 25, 2025

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the raspy-voiced, leather-backed health crank who somehow failed upward into the Cabinet, has given us many gifts during his improbable resurrection: conspiracy theories about vaccines, a dead bear in Central Park, a brain worm he discussed on camera with the casual air of someone mentioning a tennis injury. Heroin as a study aid. And the man who pushed his ex-wife to kill herself. It makes you beg the question: can this man get anymore cringe?

Yup.

You never know what in your life will stick like gum on a shoe — and with Bobby there is a lot of gum. But his biggest glob of Juicy Fruit just may be the series of text messages he allegedly sent to New York magazine's Olivia Nuzzi — missives so catastrophically unsexy they should be studied in graduate programs as a cautionary tale about what happens when a 71-year-old man with a swollen ego and too much Androgel gets an iPhone.

The whole sordid mess has now been excavated by Ryan Lizza, Nuzzi's former fiancé and a man who has clearly decided that dignity is for people who weren't publicly cuckolded by an anti-vaxxer. His Substack series has delivered the goods. And what goods they are.

Kennedy, it seems, fancied himself a bard for the ages.

“Yr open mouth awaiting my harvest,” the Health and Human Services Secretary allegedly texted, deploying the abbreviation “Yr” as if he were a teenager sexting from a flip phone in 2005 rather than a septuagenarian scion of the most mythologized family in American politics. “Drink from me Love.”

It gets worse. It always gets worse with RFK Jr., doesn't it?

“I mean to squeeze your cheeks to force open your mouth. I’ll hold your nose as you look up at me to encourage you to swallow. ‘Dont spill a drop.’”

Let us pause here to absorb the full horror. This is the man Donald Trump has entrusted with the nation’s health. This is the man who lectures Americans about toxins in their food supply. This is our Secretary of Health and Human Services — writing porn haiku like a desperate divorcee who took one tantra workshop in Sedona and never recovered.

The alleged poem concluded with geographical metaphors that suggest Bobby has spent too much time working at Riverkeeper: “I am a river You are my canyon. I mean to flow through you. I mean to subdue and tame you. My Love.”

Subdue and tame. That tracks like Weinstein.

Nuzzi was not some ingénue swept off her feet. She was an ambitious young journalist who had made her name profiling the rot of MAGA world with a detachment that read as access-for-access. Kennedy was a washed-up environmental lawyer turned conspiracy entrepreneur who had somehow convinced himself that running for president was a reasonable project for a longtime drug user, serial womanizer, and purveyor of disease misinformation. They found each other, as such people do, in the sweaty ecosystem of campaign coverage, where proximity breeds delusion and everyone convinces themselves that what they’re doing is historic rather than merely seedy. Like pretending an adult book store is a Barnes and Noble.

What Nuzzi got out of it remains unclear — though I did note her Kennedy profile was notably more sympathetic than her previous work might have suggested. What Kennedy got was the attention of a younger woman who took him seriously, which is apparently catnip to a fading man who has spent his life trading on a surname until it had become nothing more than a collection of consonants and vowels.

The collateral damage has been extensive, and it just keeps coming. As if America weren’t already stuffed to bursting from Stormy and Jeffrey, we get yet another helping of pervy old men.

Nuzzi's career at New York magazine is finished, her reputation as a clear-eyed chronicler of power now permanently asterisked. Lizza, who was already limping from his own #MeToo stumble years ago, has transformed himself into a one-man content factory of grievance, churning out installments of his romantic autopsy with the grim determination of a man who has nothing left to lose. Cheryl Hines, Kennedy's wife — Larry David's long-suffering TV spouse on *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, now long-suffering in real life too — maintains a silence so pointed it could cut glass.

And Kennedy? Kennedy is fine. Kennedy is always fine. That is the Kennedy superpower — the astonishing, infuriating, almost admirable capacity to barrel through scandal after scandal while lesser mortals are destroyed by a single misstep. Brain worms, heroin, dead wife, dead bear, whale heads, an alleged affair with a reporter covering him, text messages that read like the musings of a young boy hitting adolescence hard who stumbled upon Victorian erotica in a box at a tag sale — none of it matters. He's in the Cabinet. He's making policy. He's winning.

This is the other Kennedy legacy. Not the grace of Caroline. Certainly not his cousin Tatiana whose piece in the *New Yorker* this week was a study in grace and an indictment of RFK Jr.'s dangerous health policies. Nope, this ain't Camelot. It's more akin to Cabaret's "Kit Kat Club."

The texts will never be forgotten, but will most likely end up at the end of RFK Jr.'s Wikipedia page — his other sins taking top billing.

Nuzzi will resurface somewhere, as disgraced journalists always do — think Megyn Kelly. I'm thinking podcast!

And of course, Bobby — he's still here like that rash that won't fade away. This really is some administration.