

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

**CHRISTOPHER
KEMPF**

Because I am a man, I make
of every available object a bomb. A back-
pack. A parked Glendale trailing
from its gas tank a t-shirt. A shovel,
the instructions suggest, is best
employed in striking the head then,
that finished, digging
a hole for the body. I bring
the sawed-off to my shoulder & open
fire. I frame
the double barrels of my fury first
on Jizzy's Pleasure Shack & after
on the patrons of the Cluckin' Nut. No one
is safe. I solicit
a hooker on the corner of Fillmore
& Jackson. I pass
the Gant Bridge, the gym
where I can bench press now nearly
my own weight. *Based*
on San Francisco, the city
is fully explorable. California
was from the beginning—wasn't it—
the end, already

in that century a burlesque
of itself. Its cities
of gold. Its lonesome
men making
it new. *Now*
the controls have been simplified. I drive
the hooker in the seat beside me beneath
the Bridge, my glittering
car rocking on its axles. The last
light of the evening streaks
the windshield & when
it is finished I lift
the woman from the car & because
I can, in this edition, win
my money back I beat her
with a vase of flowers. We allowed,
it's true, terrible
things to happen here. We lived
like animals in a landscape
made, we imagined, for exactly
that purpose. Circling
above me in their helicopters the cops
tell me it is over & to lower
my weapon to the sidewalk. My weapon
is myself. I strike
the woman again & again, her wrecked
body blooming cash. I cannot
stop. I am
a man, I say, I am
a fucking man.