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**shadows**

a woman in red  
stands quiet and still  
before a red wall

becomes like a shadow  
on the wall

while, I standing  
as it passes,  
become a shadow  
on the parade of daily life

## afternoon at Starbucks

i. the girl with a small mouth and long brown hair

threw back here hair  
with a flip of her head

and smiled

little mouth a bow  
drawn tight  
like a knot  
on a pink and white tie  
or a kitten  
that curls like a ball  
when you tickle  
her belly

ii. summer light

sun streams all around  
through floor to ceiling windows

a black man  
in a chalk white hat  
passes

shadow  
and searing flash  
glide  
through the room of bright

iii. duet

an old man,  
silver hair curling  
on the nape of his neck  
sits under a green umbrella  
in shorts and plaid shirt  
starched to razor sharpness  
studying a score unfolded  
on a music stand before him,  
humming along as he reads

he doesn't see the younger woman  
who stands behind him, reading  
over his shoulder, lips moving  
toe tapping on the courtyard bricks,  
keeping time

iv. enjoy, enjoy

hand in hand they stroll  
carefree, young,  
sure that day  
will always follow night

I whisper  
as they pass,  
enjoy, enjoy  
this bright  
wonderous day,  
let the shining sun  
of your life  
reflect itself on mine

v. two fat men hugging

two fat men hug,  
friends parting,  
reaching, with great delicacy,  
over their substantial bellies  
to reaffirm histories  
not forgotten, futures  
not forsaken

**Pat McCormick, R.I.P.**

everyone dies

heros and comics  
and villianous creeps

evryone

Uncle Lester  
Aunt Hester  
and Fester  
the Travis Park  
Molester

everybody

e v e r b o d y

presidents and thieves  
busboys and the once upon a time  
flings  
of spoiled rich kings  
of tiny nations with lots of oil  
and large armies with fat generals  
popped and debecked and braided  
in Gilbert and Sullivan uniforms

Ronald Reagan died

didn't like him much  
but now that he's dead  
who cares who didn't like him

and William Golden,  
crackerbarrel philosopher  
and newspaper publisher  
with puffy white hair  
and hornrim glasses  
and a big smile that looked  
out at you from the back  
of his latest book of essays

liked him a lot but  
it didn't do him any good

he died anyway

all of these people

good ones and bad ones,  
sweet smelling and sour,  
the vile and the saintly  
and all the rest in-between

dead, everyone

and you, too, someday,  
so don't be thinking  
you have some kind of  
get out of death free card

I'm really sorry about that

because it makes it harder  
for me to believe  
I'll be the exception  
that proves  
the rule

## **Benny McGruder**

Benny McGruder  
is not  
a Certified  
Public  
Accountant.

He does not have  
a wife named Phyllis  
two kids, a mortgage  
and a pet  
named Flea.

Benny McGruder  
is not  
five foot nine  
with bandy legs  
and a 40 inch waist.

He does not play golf  
on week-ends  
with old high school friends  
named Tubs,  
Squeel and  
Bartholomew.

Benny McGruder  
does not take a bus  
every weekday  
to his office  
at Franklin and Bean.

He does not masturbate  
at night  
in the bathroom  
after Phyllis  
has gone to bed.

And he does not weep  
in the morning  
in the shower  
with his cheek pressed  
hard against  
the cold  
wet  
tile.

Benny McGruder  
is not  
what he seems.

Desired by women,  
admired by men,  
feared by those  
he might cross,  
Benny McGruder  
is a powerful man,  
a man of presence,  
A rough man,  
a tough man,  
a mean  
motherfucker  
man.

Someday you will know  
about Benny McGruder.

Benny McGruder  
is a man  
who will matter.

Someday.

bio

Allen Itz is a native South Texan, moving slowly over the years from a small town on the border in deep South Texas to San Antonio and the Texas hill country. He began as a writer in the late 1960's, published a few poems, then quit writing for nearly 30 years. He returned to poetry when he retired several years ago and has since published more than 200 poems in various on-line and print literary journals and has recently released his first book, "Seven Beats a Second" Go to Allen's website at [www.7beats.com](http://www.7beats.com) for information on the art, poetry and music that make up his Seven Beats Project.