

Timothy Resau

Marco Polo in Baltimore

1.

We took a Greyhound thru the stars.
You went to the back of the bus to pass farther out.
I grinned at myself in the big side window,
seeing my face in the darkness beyond Pasadena,
and a small reading light above — my hair looked like leaves.

At your mother's dinner table, you mocked Kerouac,
who was screaming in the drunken alley,
afraid of the darkness there.
I told you I loved Marilyn Monroe—

The Nightly News reported on a chicken
that laid green eggs. You said:
— *I do not like green eggs and ham.*
I laughed, and showed your mother my switchblade,
she flashed her 38s, then shot holes in the art, ruining a Goya.
Outside the twisted windows, the sky was the color of iron.

2.

Back at the loft we got high,
throwing empty beer bottles onto Eutaw Street—
Mother Seaton's Chapel was burning down—
yellow flames reflected like sins on the wet asphalt.

You were in the bathroom, painting obscenities in Italian,
Screaming that LBJ's scar was a national monument—
I had a hardon, and your hair was wet.

The kitchen was painted black, the table a glittering
Formica bar — a zodiac was painted on the ceiling,
curling into a lighter shade of blue, burning and fading
from the long florescent tubes, shinning an electrical silver.
You helped dye my hair black to match the walls.

3.

After we dumped the ashes,
I tattooed a pagan cross between your thumb and index finger.
There was a gun battle next door,
Zinny's Cut-Rite Liquors was being stuck-up.

We danced to the music and vanished in the air.
It was a matter of leaving....
We bumped into Orson Wells in the Greyhound cafeteria,
he admired your red dress and matching pumps.
You asked him if he wanted to be in your movie:
—Yes, yes, indeed, yes, he said.
You shot him in infra-red, using a 77mm star filter,
smiling he boarded a camel to Hollywood.

4.

We sipped conversation, disappearing into the coffee,
Anda shoeshine boy said he'd put a shine ona piecea
shit fora *hundred* dollas.

A man without a face began screaming that the world
was going to end in ten minutes, exciting the drag queens
at the bar: — Spacing, jest spacing, cowboy.

I tried reading but Dr. Kildare had been pre-empted
in order to bring us a Special on the Vietnam War,
while out in the streets everyone whistled *Yankee Doodle Dandy*.

I was gassed withouta mask—
you were cut by flying glass.
A young lady wanted to know what was going on, and why?
I said: — Why is a childish question.

Mistaken Identity

i.

An exercise of will.

Hooked on passion.

Green under the leaves.

Grass-stained airplanes.

Women with small feet,

open windows; closed outdoors.

Sonnets tattooed on muscled biceps.

Roasted moons before lost suns.

Copper helmets over lined brows

smearred with grease.

Ravel ... Chopin:

— A man who looked just created.

— A woman newborn.

— I've seen too many people to care.

ii.

Opaque in the art brown lantern

Nora

at the yellow door,

basking in spring water.

iii.

Large green Elm trees

on her fine knees, saying:

I Love you.

iv.

Peace rider murdered in white—

ghost woman/ golden heart—

lost sorrow in the humid night—

More woe /

much the same—

Amen.

v.

Now that my glass is empty
and I cannot move,
dawn appears thru the obnoxious heat,
and the birds sing into brain thumps.

vi.

The automatic Irises.
Mother of Peril.

vii.

He entered the blue of evening,
becoming at once subtracted by the approaches,
dangling about him.
Life suggested that money was the object.
The evening had arrived like a comet from
another galaxy.

viii.

Milton wrote with
rubber ink,
bouncing his way
along the 17th
fairway.

ix.

Hot breath weeping on the stone steps,
love on East Lanvale Street, Baltimore.
Love in desolation.
Love.

x.

Not alone,
Listening—
sweet voice,
blond doll.

xi.

Man lying on the pavement,
a coronary.

xii.

I have a coronary, too.

xiii.

Rock on ...

xiv.

She worries:

— Are you okay?

— Um, I guess so ...

faking a wave
while my heart
attacks me.

xv.

Rock on—

Afternoon

Well-polished furniture shining in the room's afternoon sunlight—
soft beams reflected off the silver—
children's muffled voices ... a day's hysteric break ... spotty traffic ...
while parents' push strollers with their infants ...
August, early evening....
A million thoughts going unnoticed, unrecorded
within the moment's exhaustion—
Carving words on paper with black ink
contained in an old fountain pen.
How old?
When purchased?
The sinking of the constant sun—
O the dependence of memory—
The words want to spurt forth, but they have nowhere to go.
They remain trapped upon a tripped tongue.
Everyone wants a piece and they're asking for it,
knowing where to go but not knowing how to get there.

L.A. Poem

A city of Angels—
who pass out thorny halos
of chrome-plated full moons
to the droves of wandering homeless,
expressing a deeper kind of love.

L.A.—
City where you lust
and want to come,
but can't ... or don't—

L.A.—
City of Hi-Volume/ Sci-Fi/ Tri-Star
and super-fly multi-media distractions—
even on Cell-Phones—

L.A.—
City of Witches—
bonding with the aging glamour
and sweeping the gutters for traces of blood—

L.A.—
City of Agents—
who shuffle and deal your life like cards—
where everyone has or finds a fitting
role to play—

L.A.—
Going Hollywood—
with its endless
auto-erotic award shows—
"*... too hip for words*"
and even Bukowski carried a camera—

L.A.—

City of the pumped-up muscle heads—
and make-believe self-expression
in a faded sterling atmosphere.

L.A.—

City of head static—
phony voice-overs—
Chinese take-outs—
forgotten lines ...
final cuts/ casting calls—
on-holds/ hold outs/ busy signals—
date-rapes/ child molesters/ wasted talent—
lost chances/ broken dreams—
missing persons/ missing parts—
in-coming calls—
out-going new-hires—
hard-to-handle drive-bys—
and one nite stands—
who leave you stranded at dawn,
soaking in the neon-laced shadows,
across from the Church of the Savior—

L.A.—

City where you drive your tomorrows
like you park your imported rental car—
somewhere between the parallel lines
of someone else's mind—