

Maestro Insana's Room 24

Since we had decided to withdraw  
From this mouse-race, it was only  
Proper and fitting that the management  
Return our fifty dollar deposit  
For the echoing marble hall.  
But, they argued, the contractual  
Agreement has been signed.  
And you may audition and rehearse  
In Insana's quarters since his rent  
Is quite overdue. Screw you, we  
Shouted. We want our money back  
Or we'll wreck the place. And that,  
Dear Maestro, explains why Cuscaden  
Set fire to the drapes, Offen wrecked  
The piano, and Nash and Puechner left  
Their swastikas carved in your door.

Maestro Insana's Room 25

Time was when it would not be  
At all unusual to hear the Maestro  
Talking to himself as you passed  
His door. It was an old habit  
Of his acquired from listening  
To wretched little children sing  
Scales as he contemplated throwing  
Himself out of the window and into  
The courtyard down below. Instead  
He took to muttering to himself,  
As old men have a habit of doing.  
It was hard to distinguish the words  
Of his Sicilian dialect, but no doubt  
They were ancient and revered curses  
Which he had brought over on the boat  
And carefully smuggled through customs.

— Oliver Haddo

1900

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900

1900