

toad, friend and competitor

on thursday evenings after his lecture,  
you can find him challenging all comers  
at the foosball courts in the rear corner  
of the 49er's tavern behind the pool tables.

in class, he props himself rodin like,  
over the top edge of the podium, reaches into  
the pocket of his scruffy levis and pulls  
out a fresh supply of rolaids,

those little white discs that settle the traumas  
of the previous nights, nights spent in love  
and in blister making over his slowly improving  
game. we usually play partners and swap

tales of the grander courts in germany and  
italy that we have plundered. this gallant  
athlete of our campus gathers his literary  
history together in a minute or two

and begins to lecture about shelly winters  
expiring by drowning in the film adapted from  
a novel by theodore dreiser, and follows up  
with some nifty info about horace liveright

and the conversation takes off to shane  
(the best movie ever made). if the class is  
in luck we adjourn and regather for the final  
titbits of wisdom, in the hallowed chambers of the 49er.

these are the usual plans, but it is generally  
impossible to keep him off the tables and out  
of the beer, and this gallant foosball magician  
reminds one of the great tommy of pinball fame.

on the tests for our 20th century lit class  
we are given several bonus questions: name two  
movies that shelly winters has the opportunity  
to drown in, and who slowly rises over the horizon

and stomps the shit out of bambi (second best movie  
ever made). In between questions, down in the  
courtyard a cheer resounds and he draws up on  
his toadish haunches and says: "at last the revolution."

-- John Kay

Long Beach CA