

record the
bash.

up from the gutter!
look at us!
it's a joke.

I smile
for when a man has been poor
all his life
he never forgets about
that.

at least in America they
have kept it sensible and
underground:
I can come back and
hide.

I've read all the damned books
and now I'm a writer
drink in hand
crossing the long Atlantic
with Sherwood, Ernie, Ezra and
Linda Lee.

HOLLYWOOD RANCH MARKET

she was 32 years younger
than I
with a body built for the
gods
and it was 4:30 a.m.
we'd lived together for
8 months
and she shook me,
"Hank?"
"yeah?"
"I have to have some chicken
gizzards!"
"what? again?"
"I've got to have them!"
"all right."

we got up and dressed.
outside it was
raining.

we drove to the Hollywood
Ranch Market.
she ordered her
chicken gizzards
and I ordered an ear of corn
and a roast beef
sandwich.

it was beginning to rain
and as we waited
a man without legs
rolled up on a platform.
he had a very dramatic face
with a large nose.
he grabbed my woman around
the calf of one of her
legs
with a hand the size of a
table radio:
"HEY, CLEO, BABY! HOW YA
DOIN'?"
"BEEFO!" she answered back,
"YOU SON OF A BITCH, HOW YA
DOING?"
"GREAT, BABY, GREAT! GOT A
LIGHT?"
Beefo had a king-size in his
mouth.
she bent over and lit him
up and one of her breasts almost
slipped out.
"YOU'RE LOOKING GREAT, BABY,
GREAT! WHO'S THE GUY? THAT YOUR
OLD MAN? HEY, MAN, HOW YA DOIN'?"
I bent over to shake and
my hand vanished into his
which seemed filled with
cold cream and desert
sands.

Beefo rolled off into the
rain and she said,
"I want to run down and see
Billyjohn, Billyjohn's got one
eye and he's the neatest guy
you ever met! be right back!"

I paid for the orders
and stood there holding the
bags for 5 or 6 minutes.
then Cleo came back,
"Billyjohn's not there, I
can't understand what happened
to Billyjohn"

back in bed we sat upright
eating. I finished my corn
and my sandwich. she put her
gizzards down.
"they just don't taste right,
they just don't taste like they
used to."
she stretched out.
then her mouth opened
covered with brown lipstick
and bits of chicken
gizzard. she began to
snore.

I sat and listened to the rain
then I switched out the
light.

I had to get out of east Hollywood.
they didn't even bother to
fix the streets
anymore.

EDITH SENT US

you just get in from the track
after losing
and taking the wrong freeway
lost in the dark
the workers roaring around you
eager to get to their tv sets.
you feel very subnormal,
idiotic.
splendid people don't get lost on
freeways.
you finally get off 91
onto 7
into 405
into the Harbor freeway
into the Hollywood freeway,
off at Silverlake for your 3 bottles of
wine.
then down Hollywood Blvd.
to the side street and on in.
a book of poems in the mail.
you read 5 or 6 poems in the bathtub
then hurl the book from the tub to the wastebasket
get out, towel, then into the yellow robe