

it enables me to erase, no. i think i just feel at home with one. i've known these yellow pencils since childhood. sometimes i'll just pick up one of the japanese pens to give them a whirl and most times when i do this it seems as though the pen is fighting me. i swear, usually i get the message it wants nothing to do with either me or the page. especially the one from sakura; it's like trying to write with an unruly sewing needle. but, i keep them around nonetheless. the best thing to do with them is to simply hold one at a time; take the cap off of it and then put it back on; inspect the smart clip on it; notice how everything works so flawlessly. there are never any messy points, say, like on a bic pen. bic pens always have runny noses. and this, i confess, i cannot stand, and so i don't use them either. in fact, i won't even own one since they are not even pleasant to look at. and they're sold by the dozen usually, which i find repulsive and disconcerting. what would i ever want with twelve ugly pens with runny noses? to get back to the japanese pens: sometimes too i purchase one just so that i can walk around with it clipped into my shirt pocket. it's a very handsome piece of jewelry as far as i'm concerned, for little more than a dollar. and since i can't afford a new japanese car i figure this is a decent substitute. the biggest charge came last week when i was at the supermarket and this lovely woman whom i happened to be speaking with asked me if i had a pen that she might borrow. i can't tell you how much ahead of the rest of the herd i felt when i pulled out my completely full and very spiffy pen from sakura and handed it to her. i had no fear when she took the cap off that there would be any greasy blue snots on the nose, the point. and of course there weren't. and when she mentioned to me what a nice color the ink was i had to look over at it to see exactly what color she was talking about since i had never myself used the pen. and beautiful it was, yes, my god. it was pure turquoise, of all colors, my favorite. what made it all the more magnificent too was that this lovely woman had to go with this turquoise ink such wild unbelievably lively red hair, so red and so wild as to be able to make a candy cane bleed.

INSECURE

i've had a key on my key chain now  
for over a year and i don't know  
what it's for  
  
and i'm afraid  
to take it off

old tall dry sunflowers  
dog lying on the brown lawn  
squinting

on its side  
what's left of a bottle of wine  
in the fridge

#### WHEN I LEAVE HERE

i consider what  
i'll take with me  
when i leave here,  
and exactly what  
i'll leave behind  
or sell, and from  
the looks of it  
there won't be  
much that'll go.  
after all there  
isn't that much  
room in my car to  
begin with. the  
small oak coffee  
table i won't take,  
although i've always  
liked it.  
the table and chairs  
won't go, which is  
unfortunate since  
the chairs were  
given to me as a  
wedding present  
by my sister, and  
the table is another  
piece of oak i've  
become very attached  
to. the bed's not  
mine; the other chairs  
aren't mine;  
the sofa belongs  
to s. really,  
all i see myself  
leaving with is  
the stereo. then

there are some  
books, clothes,  
and of course my  
typewriter and  
some useless  
manuscripts.  
the huge abstract  
painting i can  
store somewhere.  
i don't want to  
give that up since  
it certainly is a  
fine painting.  
and then there are  
the two black iron  
frying pans. those  
i must take, as  
insane as that might  
sound. they symbolize  
my domestic side.

#### AGAINST THE WORLD

i tell her i have to  
be the one sleeping  
on the outside  
since i'm the  
first line of  
defense