

But I figure I am doing ok because I wrote about 400 poems and had all but 16 published and once got a \$10 check from the San Francisco Review. Then I meet this little anthologist who straightens his tie and says he had 1200 published and I should keep in there swinging. (Later, in the locker room, he asks me why I'm still using that greasy kid stuff in my hair. So I switch to Vitalis and my eyebrows fall out.)

Remember it took that dirty-minded southerner 14 years to get the glass menagerie produced my mother writes from California but I am no playwright and Keats died at 26.

Understand I'm not crying in my beer and I appreciate all the helpful hints I've gotten. I keep cheerful. Smilers always win. But what do you do when your wife says why dont you take up building model boats?

-- Carl Larsen

New York, New York

### Larsen's Decameron

On the way to work this morning I read where one out of every four people in Manhattan has a serious mental problem. That is not exactly great reading matter if you're on a crowded subway, but I came through unscathed.

Then on the way home, I got to thinking that there are 24 apartments in our building, with at least two people living in every one. Which figures out to when we go to bed at night there are a minimum of 12 people around us who are criminally insane. It makes you wonder.

The guy upstairs is one, definitely. Twice a week he practices his two-cushion shot on his wife, banking her neatly off the wall and the refrigerator. Sometimes she even gets up. Then he beats hell out of her.

Another is the Super, who lives right under us. He plays the drums all night and wants to get a job with an orchestra. I hope so.

Two flights up there is a guy who gets callers very late at night. They give him money and he gives them some sort of injection and they leave looking very happy. I thought for awhile he was a doctor but I'm beginning to have my doubts.

And right across the hall is this nice little old lady who wears a shawl and lives a very quiet life but there are two eyestalks in her hair that wiggle when the weather turns cold.

And the kids in the building can't be under-rated either. We've only been robbed four times since we moved in in March and the last time they went through my dirty clothes and took my only tie. Cute little buggers but they should all be electrocuted.

So tonight at dinner I noticed my wife has developed a twitch. Who was it said that the price of liberty is constant vigilance? That boy must have lived in New York City.

-- Carl Larsen

clyde and martha  
(the aging beatniks)

playlet number sixteen (in new york)

clyde: well martha this is the big city

marth: i don't hear anything

clyde: neither do i