

thinking about what I had done or hadn't done to
the radio (or her), feeling as if I had left an
army in trouble during battle, but then some kid
in a Volks

cut across me without a signal
and I forgot about all the rest
and I pushed the pedal down and
moved after him.

The Literary Life:

There is this long still knife somehow like a
cossack...

and C. writes that Ferlinghetti has written
a poem about Castro. well, all the boys
are doing poems on Castro, only
Castro's not that good
or that bad — just a small horse
in a big race.

I see this knife on the stove and I move it to
the breadboard...

after a while it is time to look around and
listen to the engines and wonder if it's
raining; after a while writing won't help
anymore, and drinking won't help anymore, or
even a good piece of ass won't.

I see this knife on the breadboard and I move it
to the sink...

this wallpaper here: how many years was it here
before I arrived? ... this cigarette in my hand
it is like a thing itself, like a donkey walking
uphill ... somebody took my candle and candle-
holder: a lady with red hair and a white face
standing near the closet, saying, "Can I have
this? can I really have this?"

The edge of this knife is not as sharp as it should
be ... but the point, the point fascinates, the way
they bring it down like that — symmetry, real Art,

and I pick up this breadknife and walk into the dining room ...

Larsen says we mustn't take ourselves so seriously. Hell, I've been telling him that for 8 years!

There is this full length mirror in the hall. I can see myself in it and I look, at last, as if I could do anything. It hasn't rained in 175 days and it is as quiet as a sleeping peacock. a friend of mine shoots pool in a hall across from the university where he teaches English, and when he gets tired of that, he drags out a .357 magnum and splits the rocks in half BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! while figuring just where the word will fit real good.

In front of the mirror I cut swift circles in the air, dividing sides of light. I am hypnotized, unsettled, embarrassed. my nose is pink, my cheeks are pink, my throat is white, my god the night, the shoe fits good, the wood, the wood ... the phone rings like a wall sliding down and ... "nothing," I answer, "no, I'm not doing anything..."

it is a dull conversation but it is soon over. I walk to the window and open it. the cars go by and a bird turns on the wire and looks at me. I think 3 centuries ahead, of myself dead that long and life seems very odd ... like a crevice of light in a buried tomb.

the bird flies away and I walk to the machine and sit down:

Dear Willie:

I got your letter, everything fine here ...

Bukowski's Crucifix In A Deathhand is being published by Lujon Press, 1109 Rue Royale, New Orleans 16, La. (\$3) and Cold Dogs In The Courtyard by the Literary Times, Box 4327, Chicago 80, Illinois (\$1.25).