

Wormwood

It was a hole in the wall bar ...

We poured cool clear water
over the cube of sugar
on the perforated spoon
atop the glass
containing the Pernod
until the mixed molecules
blended to
the proper milky color,

and then we sipped.

Pretending it was
wormwooded absinthe
until it was,

we sipped the Nectar of the Gods
and did partake
of all their wisdoms
and their joys.

We laughed with and at
everybody and everything
We mended all the world's ills
and purged it of its sins,

for our minds were sharp
as a surgeon's blade
and our feet were solid on the ground.

Far into the night ...

We paid the barkeep
with a bill
twice the size the check
and left the smaller bills
and change
scattered helter-skelter
on the bar,

for our minds were sharp
as a surgeon's blade
and our feet were solid on the ground.

We rose to leave

and bid adieu
to all our friends
both old and new

but then,

while our spirits
played on Mt Olympus
where the Gods
had played before ...

our mortal selves
lay patiently
upon the barroom floor.

in the window of an antique shop
(in georgetown)

a figurine in jade
(two inches tall)

a curved damascus blade
(in ornate sheath)

an old iron dutch oven
(early american)

a little fat buddha in one corner and
a sign about tickets to a charity
bazaar in the other

the belly of a fly walking across the
window pane inside

To all ye sweet bikinied things:

Wormie (in his published correspondence
to V. N.) drove me to the bible; but I
found it. WORMWOOD

Revelation -- Chapter 8 -- verse 11

reads:

"And the name of the star is
called Wormwood: and the third
part of the waters became worm-
wood; and many men died of the
waters because they were made
bitter."

-- Sid Rufus

Washington, D.C.