

Snafu

It's spooky out today -- there's so clear a cleavage between reality and fantasy that I'm a different kind of nervous -- I miss my good old normal (hah!) state warmed by the assurance that nothing is what it seems.

Today the tilt sign in my head is out.
Palms are dry. I look at people's faces without waiting for the masks to fall off.
I could probably walk across a bridge without wondering how it would feel.
Ignominy and necromancy are fun to pronounce.
The noonday apple will probably be a Rubens, no Picasso, and without its sneaky mesocarpic brown.
Neither bell bottoms nor pin stripes look like costumes; and I'll bet I could go inside a church and not think about W. C. Fields or on the whole rather be in Philadelphia.
It's just possible I could watch a Janet Leigh movie and fully appreciate her tits for what they are.

But what I think I'll do is go to bed early so it won't seem so long before the world returns to the way I know it really is.

-- Charles Stetler

Long Beach, California

The Stetler Principle

is named for charles s. stetler,
poet, pool-shark, and philogynist.
it is one of the few remaining absolutes.
here is how it works:

let's suppose that you are on your way
home from the office
when off to the horizon you espy

MORRY'S OF NAPLES FINE WINES IMPORTED CHEESES

so you ask yourself,
i wonder how much gin is left?
vermouth? pearl onions? swizzle sticks?
and what if the electric ice-cube tray
is on the blink again?

and what about the sherry
that you like to keep at hand
upon the bedstand?

now if you've ever been a boy scout
or have seen the dragon of the morning after
rear his scaly tail, exhale his flinty breath,

THEN YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY INVOKE THE STETLER PRINCIPLE

to wit, that gin will never spoil,
vermouth will keep a damn long time,
and sherry may in fact improve with age,

in other words, DON'T GET CAUGHT SHORT
THE STUFF WILL NEVER GO TO WASTE

the sanity you save may be your own.

Self Reliance

Siegfried Wolfe, a resident of Surf-
side, California, is in his early
twenties and has not learned fear. He wins
at volleyball, as graceful as the proverb-

ial gazelle, and regularly runs
the rack at pool. Nor is he any dam-
sel's fool. He has yet to meet his Brunnhild,
and there are those in his pack who'd bet he never

will. He didn't do particularly
well in school, but it has yet to matter.
Effortlessly he transcends the social ladder,
yesterday a guest at lunch of Dahlia

Dahl, the fashionable columnist,
tomorrow with a duchess or a lady
novelist. Or maybe, for a change,
a hairdresser or a home ec major.

Nor is he at a disadvantage
in the world of men. A Hollywood
producer has a notion he could be
the next great Tarzan, and, on weekends, he

is often flown to Palm Springs or the Play-
boy mansion. Rich young men are proud to be
his friends. And everyone agrees he'll
rise quite high -- they just can't specify.

His mother (Nature) has been good to him
and he is less than condescending to