

the bombing of Berlin

the Americans would come over, he told me,
there was nothing to stop them,
they had red and blue lights on their planes
and they took their time,
and it was funny, you know,
a bomb would take out an entire section
and leave the thing next to it standing,
untouched.
once, after a raid, we heard this piano playing
under the rubble
and there was some dame under there still playing the
piano,
the stuff had fallen all around her,
buried her under there and she was still playing the
piano.
after a while, when the planes came
we wouldn't run underground anymore,
we just stayed where we were
on first and second floors and looked up
at the red and blue lights and said,
god damn them.
well, he said, picking up his beer,
we lost the war, that's all there was to
it.

the great writer

the great writer in bed
shades down
doesn't want to see them
doesn't want to write anymore
doesn't want to try anymore;
the editors talk about him--
some say he's insane
some say he's dead;
his wife answers the mail:
"...does not wish to..."
and some walk up and down
outside his house,
look at the pulled
shades;
some go up and ring the
bell.
nobody answers.
the great writer does not want to be
disturbed. the great writer is not
in. the great writer has gone
away.
but they want to flash lights on him,
hear his voice, some
reason.

if he can give a reason
he does not; if he can't,
there isn't
any.

strange and invisible arrangements are
made and his books and paintings are
auctioned off
but no new work has appeared in
years.

but they can't understand his
silence--
if he is dead
they want to know it, if he is
insane they want to know it, if he has a
reason...

they walk past his house
write letters
ring.
they cannot understand
it.

I rather like
it.

Ice

swine under the purple moon in
platinum curlers,
lilac leaves beneath the flea
tree,
bum beneath the honeymoon tree,
barber with the shakes,
photo of Tom Mix,
dirty underwear of sweet little
girls,
thin wire about a chicken coop,
the beard of Castro
the bread of Communion,
DiMaggio lighting a cigarette in Oakland
as through the streets
lady torturers shake their priceless
bungholes;
the Kennedy deaths now like old gangster
movies, the real-estators shall
inherit--
who will bury the undertaker?
who will swallow the geek?
who will scrub my kitchen
floor?