

open letter

just received your reply of 2/17 to my missive of 2/12.

brace yourself: i am about to pay you a compliment.

we have hurled bouquets and brickbats each other's way  
from time to time, in person and in print ... BUT

you do answer your mail promptly.

more promptly than the doubleday book club, art linkletter,  
the atlantic monthly ...

more promptly than the ovaltine conglomerate, purveyor,  
in 1949, of the captain-midnight-get-the-drop-on-  
'em-combination-gun-tattoo-ring-magnifying-glass-  
and-secret-compartment ...

(i was the first on my block to order mine, the last to  
receive it -- you wonder why i write about toads?)

you answer your letters faster than a speeding bullshit,  
more powerful than a local anesthetic, able to leap  
to the liquor store at a single bound ...

whoa, nellie, there i go again fucking up a serious poem  
with half-wit parody ...

when all i wanted to say was that your response to letters  
shows a consideration that is generally lacking in  
the people to whom you are a god.

i lack it too.

it's dangerous to let the guard down with you, you fucking  
alley-fighter,

but my thanks for the good words, the good lines, the good  
times.

the good life

my girlfriend is talking about finding a new apartment.  
she doesn't like this place because it has few windows  
and is situated between buildings on a narrow walkway  
and consequently there is no view and little air.

but i like the place. no one ever visits me here.  
no one ever calls me. hardly anyone even knows

where i live. when i come home, i am  
really home, no interruptions from the outside world.

i have my books and booze and cans of spaghetti.  
i have a television and a typewriter.  
i have a telephone for when i get drunk  
and start calling my friends and relatives, collect.

on weekends i seldom venture outside.  
i send my girl out for the sunday paper.  
i live a block from the beach and i haven't  
had the sand between my toes since 1965.

my girlfriend is beautiful and excites me greatly.  
i love her most when she is asleep and she sleeps a lot.  
she is gone to work when i wake up in the morning.  
god, i've got it good.

it's too good to last. she'll probably catch me  
slipping off for a little sampling of the strange stuff.  
or else one of these days when i get pissed at her  
and storm to the door, she may not bother to call me back.

or marriage.  
if i marry her, well that's the killer.  
if i don't,  
she'll eventually have to find someone who will.

but for now i only have to discourage a move.  
if necessary i'll accompany her apartment hunting.  
what landlady is going to rent to a chick  
with a two-hundred-forty pound mole for a pet?

bobbie at slumber

i'm glad your new job tires you.  
you sleep, and i set up in bed.  
i watch the news and johnny carson.  
i watch you.

earth has not anything more fair to gaze upon  
... especially on these hot nights  
when you are tangled with your comforter,  
bare-titted, and your wet pants

cleave to your little crack. it is that  
stasis that joyce talked about:  
i do not even want to fuck you then,  
or anyone.