

I HAVE THIS WAY

FOOD PROCESSING

The food processing plant
begins to operate in August &
for 3 whole months they
grind up corn & peas &
turnips round the clock.

Lying in bed at night,
there is a constant
grinding in my ears.
The whole town lies
awake &
listens to the grinding.

& when the wind is right --
the smell of slaughter
from the slaughter house
across the tracks.

There is no other
industry in this
small town.

There are no Flower Children here.

-- John Bennett

Ellensburg WA

I have this way of
opening the second
storey window &
looking down at the
yelping dog next door,
making him cower &
go into his dog house.

I did it yesterday
at 8 a.m. &
my wife who was
painting in the backyard
looked up & then
rolled over on the ground
like a dog,
lay there
laughing in the
sunlight.

I grinned &
the dog went to his
dog house &
I closed the window,
feeling good,
knowing she's the
only one who makes it
easy, being what I am.

PARKED CAR

They were both sitting there in the yellow car outside
the liquor store. I guess he was shouting 'cause his
mouth kept opening and closing but the traffic sounds
made it a bit remote and silly. Then he started throwing
the beer out of the can he was holding in her face and it
went everywhere, her eyelashes and cheeks were dripping
with it, even the windshield was covered with foam. When
the can was empty he threw that to her head. She sat
there the whole time just staring at him, not talking,
not moving, maybe not even feeling how soaked her short

page-boy hair was, still staring at him as he went on with his silent shouting. I don't think she loved him very much at that moment.

Aaaarghhh....

There's a pain for everything and many names for much nothing. There was an old woman at my door, she was dressed like an improbable young maiden of dubious virtue and wanted to sell me a blow-job. I declined and was called queer or something. Afterwards I sat at my typewriter, I sat at my mechanical life and wondered why. Why do I live just a bit off?

It was a full moon out there, it was a full moon every where and inside I found a new variety of aching. I marvelled for a while and spent the rest of the night waving at shapes that I knew to be past perfect loves I had dug up. There's a pain for everything, and a few still unassigned. I always get caught, somehow.

-- Claude Bessy

Santa Monica CA

it catches you off guard, hurls you to the ground. you cannot see. your fingers clutch the soil. in another moment you do something that will take the rest of your life to explain. your mother does not understand. twenty years later your brother still spits whenever your name is mentioned. you grow old all alone. and older still. your relatives think you will never die. one of them brings you some homemade cake. it tastes kind of funny. that night you dream of a man who walks in the wake of a flood. his shoes make sucking noises in the mud. he has no memory.

someone gives you chocolate. little cubes of it. enough to build a gigantic city in the middle of your kitchen floor. the roaches can all be palace guards. your cat is waiting for the right moment to attack. a guard spits off of the parapet and tells you it was much worse five years ago. during the great wars. your wife is boiling water. she leans over the stove as the cat rubs against her ankles. she seems to be calling for help.