

So I patted him on the back and he rode on,  
he who before the separation  
used to hurl himself into my arms  
and want me never to let go of him.

I'm not sure just how I've been either, John.

#### A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO SOCIETY

I am against making guns illegal.  
I am, however, proposing legislation  
for the registration of guitars.

Guns will be necessary  
to shoot the guitar violators.

#### A PROFUNDITY

Awaiting a Bogey movie  
I caught the tail-end of the red-neck news.

This very highly paid anchor man  
leaned out of the tube  
to conclude his report on the death of Euell Gibbons  
with, "He who advocated natural foods,  
died of natural causes."

#### PHASES

no matter what i got interested in as a kid,  
whether it was girls or poetry or growing a beard,  
if my mother didn't approve of it, she invariably  
dismissed it with, "it's only a phase; he'll grow out of it."

then last sunday chuck and ron and i were sitting  
in this mexican bar and they were giving me a ration of shit.

"yeah," chuck said, "i don't see much of the bear anymore --  
he's into his foosball phase."

"i understand," ron said,  
"i suffered through his billiards and his spook obsessions."

okay, you guys, admittedly i don't have much  
of a backhand right at foosball,

and admittedly i could never line up longshots  
over the rims of my spectacles at pool,

and admittedly i have a tendency to become absorbed in  
an activity,  
burn it and myself out, and turn to something else,

but back in '64-'65,  
when little anthony was in his prime,  
when blacks and whites marched arm-in-arm for selma,  
when at garfono's pizza parlor on friday afternoons,  
no one cared if i danced with black girls,  
nor did i care if they danced with whites,  
when al jefferson used to put me up if my wife threw me  
out  
and ted short taught me how to lose six bets on one race  
at santa anita,

back there, for one brief shining moment as they say in  
camelot  
for one year about which i have never satisfactorily  
written

take my word for it, i was one hell of a nigger.

## LITERATURE AND LIFE

There is a scene in Under the Volcano  
which I have always found incomparably high comedy  
because it is tragedy as well.  
The Consul, rising from a couple of hours sleep  
and still half-schnockered,  
finds a note from his wife informing him she has cut  
out for good.

He tosses it aside, literally digs up a bottle from  
the yard,  
and after a timeless period of getting straight,  
wanders back inside musing something like,  
"I wonder where she's gone? Probably out to get some  
groceries?"

To properly appreciate this scene you must understand  
that he is passionately in love with his wife  
(yes, I realize that isn't easy to fathom)  
that she is the only thing that he had left.