

you're being kind.

I'm a kind person.

many of your readers don't think so.

what do you think?

I think you're getting tired.

tiredness often helps create kindness. do you think I'm finished?

I'll know when I read your next work.

how will I know when you're finished?

I don't pose as a writer.

what do you pose as?

your interviewer.

I think you're a fairly good one. when will I know when you're finished?

I think we're both finished now, he said,
turning off the tape machine.

WITHIN MY OWN MADNESS

I have always been fascinated by Chinese armies
of the past,
Adolph Hitler, slim young ladies in long dresses,
a checkerboard without pieces, flags of any country,
policemen of other countries, marmalade in the jar,
people standing outside of movie houses, men with one arm,
horses about ready to shit, how badly great actors act,
canaries at night, frogs in the center of a road,
bedsprings, the whirling of turds in a toilet,
paperclips, dark green, beds full of dying, betrayal,
fear, dark green freeway signs, chickens, chicken dung,
black traffic policemen, the deaths of president's wives,
how badly great actresses act, the failure of the poets,
the really really rich, the really really poor,
the murderers
and the murdered, the rapists and the raped
what my mother dreamt

within my own madness I have not been so fascinated by
myself, Italians, Jews, Englishmen,
the Women's Liberation Movement,
Spain, horse shows, the Pope, spinach, the sea,
the mountains,
the sunset

lemon trees fascinate me, palm trees do not
kindness fascinates me, love does not

preciseness fascinates me and the end of long-
windedness.

ROCK

here were all these males tuning their guitars
not a woman around
and they were content with that.
then they started arguing about who was best
and what was wrong with the so-called best.
and a couple of them had been famous
and they sat there on my rug
drinking my wine and beer and smoking my
cigarettes.

two of them stood up
to duke it out
and that's when I ran them all off
with their guitars and their guitar cases
out into the moonlight
still arguing.

I closed the door.
then I leaned against the couch and drained a beer
fast and I
gagged:
not a very good night:
it was full of
ashes.

TONGUE-CUT

he lives in the back and comes to my door
carrying his shotgun in one hand.
"listen," he says, "there was a guy sitting
on your couch on the porch while you were
gone. he didn't act right. I asked him what
he wanted. he said he wanted to see you.
I told him you weren't in. do you know a
tall black guy named 'Dave'?"

"I dunno nobody like that"