

WORKING FOR A LIVING

My tie chokes me.
My vest gives me a bear hug.
A seminal headache clamps onto my skull.

My boss gives me a project.
Before it's half done, he gives me two more.
It snowballs.
Soon I'm hopelessly behind.

The headache become a regular part of my day.
Starting each morning as I step out of the
elevator, going away on the drive home each
night if I'm lucky.

This is stupid. This is no way to live.
Not only is it killing me rather quickly,
but I'm sadly underpaid,
hardly able to support my poor family.

Being poor, we are dreamers.
My wife dreams of clothes, fancy meals, a car
of her own to drive the kids around in.
My children dream of Baskin Robbins icecream,
shiny new Mattel Big Wheels.
I dream of a six months stay in some
luxurious resthome for the spiritually wounded.

The cats rub against my leg, their
meowing seems to say:
"Chow Chow Mix! We need Chow Chow Mix!"
Look everyone, I'm doing my best.

THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN

It entered his life
silently, imperceptibly
as a fog envelopes a motorboat.

Short-changed by an atomic mist
left over, no doubt, from a Japanese monster movie
the cruelest form of inflation.

Acceptance brings with it philosophy:
"I begin to see the larger pattern of things."

Daily diminished,
he watches his manhood shrink away. The wife
moves him into a dollhouse on the livingroom
carpet. The family cat
tries to eat him. He is outraged
by the enormity of the act.

Later, in the basement
he duels a mammoth spider. Slays it
in the heroic manner
with a sewing needle.

Then thru the grating. And
into the garden.

He literally drops out of sight.

JUNKMAN DREAM

I befriended the junkman
after some hesitation
he let me into the yard.

Dogs snarled
from behind rusted out coupes
& the ruins of odd luxury estate cars.

I was prepared to take
a dozen Packards
10 or 20 Lincolns
a few ratty Fords
a debauched Cadillac or two
but someone had beat me to it.
The hillside was almost empty:
sold out in lots, driven off, towed away.

POPULAR SCIENCE

All night I dream about
the genius of the masses, a
landscape that passively accepts
speeding streamlined trains.

Each decade displays
its own subtle declension of style.
I am entranced, childlike
in a technological wonderland.

The brilliant and pedestrian possibilities
tickle the mind:
What if Einstein were a poet
and all the Nazis Dadas?