

## A COLLEAGUE AND CONFRERE

blaze comes out of his office  
which is right across from mine

and he says, "that sonuvabitch brown --  
he's gone too far this time!"

and for a split-second i figure  
the governor has cut our pay  
or maybe just fired us all and  
turned the whole fucking university system  
over to the jesuits.

but it turns out that his deed  
is not that trivial: he's signed into law  
a bill giving the track an even bigger slice  
of the exacta pool than they're already grubbing.

good old blaze; his type of professor  
is a model discontinued by the graduate schools.

## A CORNER OF ONE'S OWN

I go to see Julia  
which is great but enough to drive one  
back to cigarettes and early drinking hours,  
what with Jane Fonda as Lillian Hellman  
laboring glamorously at her typewriter,  
ashtray to one side, shot glass to the other.

And then she's out complaining to Jason Robards  
that she can't write her play there  
in their homely beach-house on Martha's Vineyard,  
perhaps they'd better go to Paris,

and I'm reminded of Virginia Woolf's famous formulation  
that what a woman needs to be a novelist  
is an independent income  
and a room of her own,

and I think of my note-pad of projected projects  
resting beneath a table-top of student papers,

and Virgie,  
Lil,  
I love you, love to read you,  
love to read about you,  
love to teach your works,

but I'm writing this  
at a typewriter I don't really own,  
in a cluttered corner of the one-bedroom apartment  
that the girl I live with claims is hers

and I feel for you  
but can't quite find you.

#### BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

I understand there's a book out  
on how to get your kids  
to do what you want them to.  
Well, I dropped in for a holiday drink  
with my friend Dave Cherin,  
and he had told his younger son,  
Dylan Thomas Cherin  
(I hold Dave's wife,  
Patricia Hamilton Dominique Esme O'Connor Cherin,  
fully responsible for the name,  
especially since her other two kids  
are named Alexander Hamilton  
and Sarah Isadora)

and anyway Dave had told young Dylan Thomas  
that if he was bad  
Santa would bring Rudolph in the house with him  
and Rudolph would take a dump  
right under the Christmas tree  
and Santa would put Dylan Thomas's name on it.

The child was behaving perfectly.

#### OLD FOLKS' DAY

i was in the bank near the retirement community  
(where the lines are always long  
because the financial dealings are so complicated,  
not to mention that the customers look upon  
their visit as being of a social nature)

when i saw this old guy fall off his bicycle.

he didn't get up,  
and my first impulse was to rush to his assistance,  
but my wiser nature prevailed