BY THE PARALLEL BARS IN THE PARK

trying to wring death out of the bones
get the blood pumping
shirt off dripping away in the sun

& this old geezer comes up in a huge grey herringbone coat
nearly screaming at me, "you kids are all alike," he says, "always trying to impress the ladies. me i've fucked them all. Lana Turner in the ass, nailed Marilyn & all she had on was a pair of red pumps, Rita Hayworth even Farrah Fawcett. you name em, i've fucked em. even that broad over there, screwed her about 12 times." & he points to one of the mothers swinging her kid.
"as long as you've got a good hand, one good palm," he says, nearly sticking his claw in my face, "you can have anyone of them & never get your heart broken."

then he shuffles off stepping through one of the sand boxes taking a long look at one of the prettiest women as he walks past.

MY 9 YR. OLD DAUGHTER ON A BAD DAY

first her body is falling apart at the seams
an abrupt stomach attack in the middle of breakfast

her limp at full throttle & the near microscopic scratch on the side of her foot she shows me
later she tells me the sun is
giving her a headache
as though it didn't have enough to
do pumping up watermelons &
daisies

then it's the apocalyptic voice
of doom & she just knows
the store will be closed that
has her favorite pastry
her mom's gonna be pissed about
her foot
that puppies are eating cardboard
on the streets of Manila

& i want to plug up all the holes
whip out psychic band-aids
potions, steaming herbs give her
more than this hug
& conversation

her eyes are big & blue & on the
verge of puncture -- do you love me?
they ask
-- love you very much, i tell her

being a weekend father is very
hard, i think as we head out of
the park

being a weekend daughter must be
equally as difficult.

14 YEARS TOGETHER & OTHERWISE

"batten down the hatches," he says
a huge swirling wave slapping
through a porthole just inches
from his head

"secure the anchor," she orders
& they tie ropes to the children
then with wild eyes she threatens
to jump overboard
but all she does is puke over the
side instead
then they both hug till the calm
untie the children