

"the son of a bitch got
away," somebody
said.
one man glanced toward the
sky
as if looking for an invasion
from space.
the cook from the Mexican cafe
stood in his
dirty apron.
then somebody moved forward and
helped the pregnant woman
to her feet.

THE GERMAN HOTEL

the German hotel was very strange and expensive and had double doors to the rooms, very thick doors, and it overlooked the park and the vasser tern and in the mornings it was usually too late for breakfast and the maids would be everywhere changing sheets and bringing in towels, but you never saw any hotel guests, only the maids and the desk man and the day desk man was all right because we were sober during the day but we had trouble with the night man who was some sort of snob and not very good with getting the corkscrews and ice and wine glasses up to us and he was always phoning us saying the other guests objected to our noise.
what other guests?

I always told him that everything was very quiet, nothing was going on, that somebody must be crazy, so will you please stop ringing?
but he always kept ringing, he became almost like a companion to us through the night.
but the day man was very nice, he always had little messages of importance that either meant money, or a good friend coming to see us, or both.
we stayed at the hotel twice during our two trips to Europe and each time we checked out the day clerk bowed ever so slightly, he was tall and well-dressed and pleasant and he said each time: "it was nice to have you with us. please come here again if you return."
"thank you," we said, "thank you."

it's our favorite hotel and if I ever get rich I am going to buy it and fire the night clerk and there will be enough ice cubes and corkscrews for everybody.

-- Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA