

AFTER ONE TOO MANY SAMARITANS

if someone tried to
help him he went
for the jugular
his own if necessary.

if a friend offered him
a tip on a job
he got himself invited
to dinner and went for
the guy's wife.

when his own wife
offered to stop
bitching about bowling
night he went two games
without a strike and
stashed his bowling
shirt in the bottom drawer.

when his mother called
he got drunk for a week.
one of his other
relatives offered to die
and he was offended by
the good will inherent
in the gesture.

he started digging
a tunnel at night

under the bedroom wall
when his wife was
supposed to be sleeping.
sometimes after a night's
work he found a glass
of beer and a sandwich
on the nightstand.

one morning around
dawn he broke through the
grass in the backyard
the dog trotted up with
slippers & paper
and he crushed its skull
and escaped.

a week later he woke
up in his room at the
st george and the light
came in w/o offering
a helping hand & he thought
so this is it.

and got into the habit
like descarte of
sleeping till noon.

-- Christopher Daly

Seal Beach CA

SPRING

Some girl I loved but now hate is lying out on an extremely windy day. Turning a corner, I see her. She is out on a towel and is wearing a bikini. The towel is a large one and won't stay down. The edges keep flapping up in the wind, and she is all movement trying to keep the edges down. She has a book out and a drink, but she will never get to them.

The wind blows and slows me down. I am trying to get around the corner. I don't want her to see me. That

is the last thing I want. The corners flap, and she is sprawling all over like a child chasing after papers -- no hope to get them back in the notebook as they fly everywhere in all the various currents of a very warm and windy day.

THE SPELL

In our world we've conquered many maladies and have learned to understand many problems. Our success has had limits however, and there are some individual cases which we can only say elude us. One such story is of a young boy who at twelve years old is unable to focus his attention on anything. He hasn't learned language or how to listen and is always in a state of distraction.

Our problem in dealing with our world is that we have set limits on possibilities. We look for reasons that abide in a natural order, in the limits we have set, not even suspecting answers which are valid. This would pose a threat to our peace. Were we to find them, a whole new order would have to be admitted, and we are too settled and safe in the one we have hidden ourselves in. This is why we will never understand the whole order of things.

Take for example this boy. He was indeed normal as a child. His parents took a train to Boston one weekend, and they were all riding, the three of them, in the coach section. The baby was upset by the motion and noise and was crying -- screaming. On that train a man was trying to sleep. The baby was keeping him awake, and he needed sleep before an urgent matter in Boston. Taking the idea of distracting the baby with amusement into his mind, he waved his hand, and a clown appeared in the baby's mind to be right before its eyes. As clear and true as life, the clown performed endlessly. Even when the baby slept, it was there in its dreams. The weekend passed calmly. The train arrived in Boston. The man had the sleep he needed. He left the train, forgetting to wave off the spell. The child, of course, never the same.

THE INVENTORY

I was working in a rather large department store in a huge indoor-outdoor shopping mall, and we were working hard to complete the annual inventory. There was quite