

a bit of stock in my department, and the paperwork was complicated. Frequently, because of a mistake by one of the employees, there was a need to stop and authorize. There were quite a few people scattered about bending to count or standing with pencil in hand to make an entry. Some important authorizations came up, and I went to look for the manager.

He was out of the store, but to wait would mean holding up quite a bit of work that needed to be completed. I left the indoor mall, went to the mall outside, and began to walk toward the restaurant where he often spent his hours at lunch. It was a clear calm day, but in the quiet there was a sudden increasingly intensifying roar as a jet makes when it is passing low overhead.

Over a row of the box-like buildings of the shopping center I saw a missile approaching. It crashed not far over into part of the mall. There was a huge explosion, and everywhere, from out of the buildings, people streamed out to gather in a panic. One girl from my store had followed me out to give me another form to take for authorization. She met me about the time the first missile struck. We got up and began running. I held her arm and tried frantically to get her to keep pace in a sprint. She held up though, dragging against me and leaning back to straighten her nylons.

-- Bruce Ormsby Adam

Glenview IL

RED SAUCE

the three of us sit at the round table gobbling down plates of spaghetti, breaking apart bagels which are a poor substitute for bread, drinking enough cheap wine to keep the conversation lively and the plain sauce tasting good. e heats up more bagels when we devour the ones on the table, and she drops them, with a crash, in front of me and the visiting painter. we've been together since early morning, we're all a bit tired, our talks continually skirting tiny arguments which

are not worth delving into with any energy.
i nail a chunk of bagel with my
fork and drive it around my plate,
soaking up the remains of the red
sauce which i could not make hot
enough with the chili oil. after
dinner we get up one at a time,
feeling our stomachs, roaming over
by the stove to warm ourselves, and
where we will wait for the coffee to
be ready. s the painter of the
sublime is armenian, and he stands
leaning, bemoaning the fact that
the northeast is the wrong area for
a person of his darkness to be
living. when the coffee is ready
he refuses it and water for tea
has to be put on

SEPTEMBER LINES #4

new world green tomatoes cramming the
windowsill, and e is pondering whether
the tomatoes will ripen or not, and she
comments that they certainly are not as
good as my father's, who has tomatoes tremendous

light coming from the bedroom bends and enters
another room, insisting coyly that we
take notice of it

don't fall off the windowsill
tomato, whatever you do, don't fall. the dog
will gobble you up, devour you with glee.
the dog is waiting for just such a thing to
happen. now if the tomatoes were red already,
like my father's, then there would not be this idle
suspense to deal with

light travels, room to room,
and my eyes do not believe the manner in which
it does all this without batting a lash

dog
sitting there with the patience of a cat, waiting
for the fall, hungry as all hell for the worthless fruit

when my father plants, the earth is genuine in
its thanks

-- ronald baatz

Phoenicia NY