

## THE DRUNK WITH THE LITTLE LEGS

he fell down a stairway as a child  
and they had to operate on his legs  
and when they were done  
his legs were about half the length  
they were meant to be  
and that's the way he grew into  
manhood.

with those very short legs  
he hung around the Paris cafes  
and sketched the dancing girls  
and drank very much.

(it's strange that most of those  
who create well seem to have some  
malady.)

he was subsisting on his paintings  
many of them used by the cafe  
as advertising posters

when along came the beautiful  
and terrible whore  
and he painted her  
and became involved  
short legs and all.

she, of course, was hardly faithful,  
and one night, defending her  
faithlessness

she told him about his legs.  
that ended the affair.

he turned on the gas jets  
then shut them off  
to finish a painting.

he was a little gentleman.  
at least he was in this movie  
I saw.

he liked to wear a top hat  
and he sketched his things  
while drinking;

doing it like that  
cutting through the odds,  
he had it down tight and  
clean,

he sketched all the dancing  
girls

that would never be his,  
and one night

he got it all down and  
done,

tumbling drunk down a  
stairway  
little legs whirling



he became involved with that  
other  
terrible and beautiful  
whore.

#### NO CHANCE IN POMONA

on a half-mile track in a mile and one-sixteenth race  
where they go around twice from out of the chute  
another jock got thrown today just before the first  
turn where he was stepped-on once by a passing horse.  
he was an unknown Mexican jock wearing orange silks  
and he was flat upon his back, bleeding from the nose  
and not moving.

and nobody moved toward him, although he was near the  
rail and the horses that were then on the backstretch  
would have to come through along the rail  
where he was.

there were some moments when everybody waited for  
somebody else

then a few got tired of waiting, a very few,  
3 or 4 men jumped the fence and the outrider  
rode up and sat there on his horse, then the  
horses were coming around the curve and into the  
stretch and the men, some of the men, grabbed the  
jock by his legs and dragged him a little out of  
the path and the horses ran by just inside of him.

by the time they got the jock into the ambulance  
the winner-to-be came down the stretch the 2nd  
time and crossed the wire at 16 to one as the  
ambulance pulled away toward the track emergency  
room and the longest shot ran by around 3rd or  
4th or 5th but not on the official charts of that  
race:

it was the horse without the jock:  
the crowd had figured it right,  
but not quite.

-- Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA