

CARRY 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