

but we both had to admit
that we've had to cut back a lot on our drinking
because of the poor shape of our stomach linings.

GOLDIE GIRL

for weeks the very nice
and seemingly affectionate couple upstairs
had been regularly beating the shit
out of each other.

he'd be yelling, "you bitch,
you goddamn fucking bitch,"
and she'd be screaming,
"i swear to god if you hit me
one more time i'll get a gun
and shoot you right square
in the balls."

the whole neighborhood could hear them.
if one of them had actually killed the other
we would all have had trouble explaining to the police
why we didn't lift a finger to intervene
or call the cops.
the readers of the newspapers,
and perhaps, if the killing was sufficiently bizarre,
time magazine as well,
would never have understood that this was just one more
of the nightly seal beach marital, premarital,
extramarital, and antimarital quarrels.

but one night they finally did break up,
and they did it with a flair.
after the slammed doors, the flying objects,
and the broken windows, she wandered around
the neighborhood calling for her dog.
"goldie," she sing-songed, "i'm leaving, goldie ...
we're leaving ... come home, goldie, so you and i
can leave the fucker"

and he yelled down at her,
"you see, even the fucking dog
doesn't love your ass anymore!
no one loves you.
you're the world's most completely unloved person!"

and when she yelled back, "you'd better not
lay a hand on my plants,"

he countered with, "are you shitting me --
i'll have every one of those fuckers
ripped to shreds by dawn."

and there hasn't been shit worth watching on t.v.

ON VIOLENCE: A NOTE TO REVIEWERS

neither rhythms nor images nor anything else on the
printed page is violent.

it is violent to have your teeth kicked out, and a
gang rape is violent, and what the freeway killer
has been doing is violent. literature may be the
occasion of violence, but violent people do not
sit down and write about their violence, they go
out and be violent, so let's quit kidding ourselves
that our turns of phrase, our oxymoronic sublimations
are true violence.

in doing so, we do a disservice to the violent and to
their victims.

PATRIOTIC POEM

alexander haig says there are things
americans must be willing to die for.

he is not talking to me;
he is talking to my children.

my children, let me only call to your attention
that no one asking you to sacrifice your lives
has sacrificed his.

THE CIRCUITS ARE IN DANGER OF OVERLOADING

gene dinelli comes to my office door
to ask me, "how do you communicate
with a toad?"

and when i give up, he says, "morse toad."

then he takes the high toad
and i take the low.