

the stew smells wonderful; the shabby yellow light rides expertly every spoonful raised slowly over the sports section. i will never be able to satisfy myself with one bowl. in the street a mangy mutt stares in at me. my appetite is voracious, after all it was only a couple of hours ago that i was smack in the middle of nowhere, changing a tire in the late afternoon desert, sun pouring down my back like sand. i order another bowl of stew. i never want to leave this shabby light. the waitress has a solemn dark understanding brow. i ask her if the next bowl could be a wee bit hotter. she asks me if i want more water.

THE STUFF MY DREAMS ARE MADE OF

the sofa put out on the curb for the junk truck is soaking up rain as fast as the rain is falling. yesterday when it was sunny a few children came by and they sat in it for awhile, playing by wildly jumping up and down, and then sitting calmly with their arms around one another. i thought the junk truck would have been here by now; the sofa has been sitting out there for some four days now. i hope the rain does not make it too heavy to pick up. the same sofa was in one of my dreams last night. i was dragging it, in this gray drizzly dream, through a narrow street, taking it to a friend's apartment who said that he could use it since i was finished being its owner. as i dragged it it seemed to get caught on every little bump and indentation in the narrow street. some people stood about watching me, giggling and asking one another questions, and even in this dream, this drizzly lengthy odd dream, there were children who wanted to play on it, and as i dragged puffing they came seemingly out of nowhere and jumped high on the old springs, yelling and teasing, laughing and calling me silly names. when i stopped, in this dumb dream, to rest, i sat on the sofa, amongst these children which were multiplying like flies in a boiling july kitchen. they paid no attention to me once i was sitting, instead they went about in their games, treating me as though i were just additional rusty springs. when i could finally stand no more i broke out in a maniacal scream sending them scurrying in every direction possible. once i reached my friend's place he met me at the door and together we both dragged

the couch up to the fourth floor and shoved the ugly worn out piece of furniture against the wall opposite the delapidated television set with the dusty screen. then i remember he handed me a glass of pink lemonade and we sat drinking as the television began to warm up. when the picture came on all it consisted of was a naked light bulb burning, similar, i would have to say, to the fireplace scene they broadcast at christmas time. anyway, we sat sipping, watching, for quite some time. it was such a dreary, typical, drizzly gray dream, the kind that i am very familiar with. as i try to reconstruct what happened next in the dream i stare out the front window at the sofa, still soaking up the rain. perhaps tonight i will dream about the junk truck. in the rain a small child walks by, hands in pockets, hair drenched, completely ignoring the stuff my dreams are made of.

SOLITAIRE

i could barely keep my eyes open, but when i felt myself falling off i quickly went out onto the porch to get some air to revive, since i knew what kind of dreams were waiting for me and i did not really have the courage to face them. on the porch on the wicker table there were cards strewn about, cards from the other night when we had played almost until dawn comically struggling to see who could accumulate senseless points. the cards were exactly as we had left them. she had won the game, and i remember having slapped down the remaining cards in my hand, and i see her cards there, neatly laid out, all the faces turned up, mostly kings and queens; those cards will most likely stay right there until the next time we play. i never was one for a game of solitaire. it's strange how this table is only suitable for playing cards, how these wicker chairs seemingly are uncomfortable for any other purpose. one night when i tried to write at this table i came away completely empty. but suddenly, spontaneously, entirely out of character, i take up the cards after pulling them together into a neat pile, and i begin to shuffle them intending to take a crack at solitaire, a game just a moment ago i renounced. i play one game, with no success, then another