

IN MY DAY WE USED TO CALL IT PUSSY-WHIPPED

I was driving over a bridge when  
I got this strange station  
on the radio  
and here was this old guy  
talking to a lady doctor.

"yes, Dr. Stacey," he said,  
"my wife is going through a  
change of life ...  
she doesn't think she is  
but she is ...."

this old guy had this pleading  
whining voice.

"yes, yes, go on," said Dr.  
Stacey.

"well, Dr., after 14 years of  
marriage she is going out  
with another man ...  
I'm small and he's big,  
she's trying to replace me  
with this opposite thing,  
and she says she loves me  
but she keeps going  
with this man ...."

I was on my way to Los  
Alamitos.  
then I was over the bridge  
and on my favorite expressway ...  
a clear view for miles  
to watch for police cars.  
I opened it up to 75, then 80,  
then 85.

"Dr., this man drinks and  
my wife says  
if he keeps drinking  
she is going to leave  
him  
but he hasn't and  
she's still going with  
him ...  
I've lost weight, I've lost  
job after job, I can't  
concentrate ...."

"I see," said Dr.  
Stacey.

I had it up to  
90.

"... yet my wife keeps  
dating this man and  
she keeps dating me ..."

how romantic, I thought,  
here's a man  
who has dates  
with his wife.

"... my last job  
took me back east  
and I sent her money  
to come stay with me  
for a week and  
she seemed happy,  
she said she loved  
me but when she  
went back  
she began seeing  
him again.  
I lost my job, I  
couldn't concentrate ...."

I dropped the car back to  
60 and lit a  
cigarette.

"you evidently have a deep  
need for your wife," Dr.  
Stacey told the guy.

"I love her, Dr., but she  
is causing me all this  
misery, all this anguish.  
she's crucifying me  
just like  
my other wife did ...."

"oh," asked Dr. Stacey,  
"were you married  
before?"

the radio was fading in  
and out, getting dimmer.  
I wanted to hear what  
the Dr. was going to tell  
him.

I reached down to  
dial it more  
clearly and  
as I did so  
I lost it.

I drove along  
trying to get it  
back

working at the  
directional and volume  
knobs  
but I kept getting  
other stations --  
music, news,  
religion.  
it was useless.  
I turned the radio  
off.

I had an idea  
of what Stacey would  
tell the guy  
as I hit Willow and  
took a right: "if you  
love her enough  
just have the patience  
and the faith, just wait  
and endure  
and when the fling is  
over  
she'll come back  
she'll realize where  
the real thing is."

crap, Dr.,  
he ought to  
dump her panties  
on the doorstep  
of the big guy's place  
go get drunk and  
find a cathouse,  
hire a housekeeper  
with a big ass  
and a Swedish  
accent  
and play cribbage  
with her.

having solved all  
that  
I drove toward the  
racetrack  
with new resolve.

-- Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA