

"What did he say?" she says.

"Nothing."

I open the refrigerator door and gaze in.

"I'm going down to look at the headlines," I yell, letting the refrigerator door swing shut.

"Get me some laxative?" she pleads.

"What kind?"

"The chocolate kind."

"O.K." I say as I slip on my clothes and escape down the stairs.

As I push through the front door of the building, daylight confronts me.

And it's ugly, really ugly and loud

in Queens

in August.

And everywhere I see women with children, many children.

And I see pregnant women too, proud, waddling and protruding

and I want to kill them all, crush their melon bellies with a tire iron

while their greasy husbands inflate with rage.

Then I stumble across the parking lot, between cars.

A beat-up Cadillac drives by, full of family.

I can almost hear their conversation with the windows rolled down

but I try hard not to.

-- Douglas Goodwin

Los Angeles CA

## MY BIG FLING

it was a bad night  
one of those  
where all the talk  
only makes it worse,  
uglier and uglier.

I was never one  
who cared much for  
"discussion"  
anyhow

so I slammed the  
door

got into my car  
and I was  
on the freeway  
radio on

driving north  
into the  
big town.  
I still knew a  
few girls  
from the past.

I got a motel  
on Sunset Boulevard  
opened the bottle  
had a drink  
undressed  
took a shower  
came out  
turned on the black  
and white tv  
got on the bed

and had another  
drink.

then something came to  
me,  
I decided that any woman  
an old girl friend  
or a new one  
only meant more of  
what I had gotten away  
from.

I didn't turn on the  
lights, it felt good  
in that dark room,  
it was quiet, far away  
from any war  
of any sort.

I stayed on the bed  
and watched the tv.  
I had never cared much  
for tv  
but watching  
all those people  
with all their desires  
and all their troubles  
amused me.

I watched and I had  
two bottles and I finished  
one and I started the other  
and I watched tv.  
I felt like a boy who had  
run away from home and  
had found  
his first room.

when the second bottle was  
emptied  
I slept.

when I got back  
at noon  
the next day  
I didn't expect her  
to ask me if I had been  
fucked  
and she didn't.  
also, I didn't ask  
her  
and I didn't care.

she was quiet.  
the screaming was  
over.

and two or three days  
later  
talking easily about  
it  
we found out  
we had watched the same  
tv programs,  
the only thing was  
she said she didn't  
like them  
and I said  
I did.

and we left it  
like that.

#### THE MAN AT THE PIANO

the man at the piano  
plays a song  
he didn't write  
sings words  
that aren't his  
upon a piano  
he doesn't own

while  
people at tables  
eat, drink and talk

the man at the piano  
finishes  
to no applause

then  
begins to play  
a new song  
he didn't write  
begins to sing  
words

that aren't his  
upon a piano  
that isn't his

as the  
people at the tables  
continue to  
eat, drink and talk

when  
he finishes  
to no applause  
he announces  
over the mike  
that he is