

MESSAGE

I've been sitting in this
room for hours
typing, and drinking
red wine.

I thought I was
alone here.
the door is closed and
the window.

now a big fat fly
ugly and black

sits on the edge
of my wine glass.

where did it come
from?
so silent
like that.

that's the way
it might be
with death.

-- Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA

AN OLD FASHIONED BARBER SHOP

except that there are never any lines,
it takes me back to my youth.
all barbers are politically to the right
and i can tell this one hates the sight
of my beard and long hair and threadbare blue jeans.

he hates it even more when i say,
"just cut the hair back to two inches,
and the beard and moustache as short as
you can get without shaving me.
i don't care how i look,
and i don't want to be back in here
for four months."

he has me in and out of the chair
in five minutes.
we discuss neither politics nor
religion nor sports nor anything.

he shows some pique
when i tell him he hasn't gotten the moustache
quite short enough.

if he charges me seven bucks,
i tip him a buck.
if he charges eight bucks,
i pocket the change.

i consider our relationship a paradigm
of a pluralistic society.