

salesman, social worker  
and writer of poetry

i've longer hair, a goatee,  
mustache, large gut, suffer  
from hypertension, rampant  
cynicism and grinning  
half-drunk idiots

"good god, i certainly hope  
so," i quip, brushing past

escaping into the emptiness  
of the crowded room

#### WEARING JEANS AT THE GRAND TRAVERSE RESORT

some patrons  
of this fancy hotel  
overlooking grand traverse bay  
wear clothes worth more  
than my car.

there's money galore  
in this neck of michigan,  
especially in summer  
when the beautiful people  
float in on long, sleek yachts  
designer sails billowing.

hell, a small glass of beer  
costs a buck-fifty and

i'm strolling about in faded,  
old jeans, pullover shirt  
and paint-spotted, blue suede  
tennis shoes with bright orange  
laces. maybe it's the laces,

people are staring, as i smile,  
nod and keep on walking.

so far, only the maids  
have smiled back.

#### TELL ME YOU LOVE ME, JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

the loudmouthed  
obnoxious jerk at the end  
of the bar is black



and

everybody else  
is white and somewhat reluctant  
to try and shut him up

idiots in bars  
never accept responsibility  
for their behavior

and

this one will undoubtedly  
go into a honky-racist routine  
the moment he's confronted

which is exactly  
what happens when the bartender  
tells him to cool it

and

i realize the self-centered  
prick will never be a devotee of  
existential syllogism

"isn't," i ask, "it possible  
for people to dislike you simply  
because you're an asshole?"

and

suddenly it's so quiet  
i can hear the ice melting  
into the bourbon

BRICKS

mike plays tennis  
works in corporate  
public relations

has a beautiful wife  
two, quick-witted sons  
a house in the suburbs  
the sanctity of regular  
church attendance

yet it bothers him  
how everything seems  
so blandly preordained