

OUR MOTHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

when i turn on the fourth quarter
of the lakers-celtics game
my four-year-old son
goes running to tattletale to his mother:

"mommy, he's turning on football again!
you didn't tell him he could, did you?"

— Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA

A SAD POEM

I live in a middle-class neighborhood of an unpopular
city
but even here there have been murders a half a block
away
and I would like to write five novels before I leave.

my security system man is a weightlifter and he
walked about the house
checking it out and he noticed the bookcase:
"geez, ya got a lot of books!"
"I write,"
"you're a writer?"
"yeah"
"can I have one of your books?"
I pulled one down and autographed it for him.

he finished the housecheck and recommended various
measures.

I agreed, wrote him a check for the total amount.

the next day he phoned: "listen, I was up all night
reading that book. you've been there: all those
women, the booze ... you remind me of myself"

"thanks."

"what I like about your writing, it's easy to
understand. I'm going to show your book to all
the boys down at the office."

"o.k."

"listen, I saw those weights in your bedroom. do
you lift those weights?"

"no, they're mostly a decoration"

"you ought to work out"

"I know"

after he hung up I went in and took a pull at the weights (only 65 pounds), did ten overhead, ten gut pulls, ten arm lifts.

that was two months ago, I haven't lifted them since but

we haven't been robbed either.

just more books stolen from the bookcase (many originals I'll never be able to replace) by friends who come by to drink my wine and talk and laugh with me.

there's no security system to detect that type except my own

which has always known and which keeps failing for their sake

which is no way to conduct any type of business, even this one.

GOOD MORNING, HOW ARE YOU?

\$250,000 home, swimming pool, tennis court, sauna, 4 late model cars, a starlet wife; he was blond, young, broad-shouldered, great smile, great sense of humor.

he was an inventor, said his starlet wife.

but he always seemed to be home.

one afternoon

while he was playing tennis with his friends two plain clothes cops

walked up

handcuffed him

took him

off.

it was in the papers the next day: he was a hit man wanted for killing over one hundred men.

what bothered the neighbors most was

not who would move in next

but

when

had he found time to do it?

— Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA