

"you should have,"
she said, "it would
have saved you a lot
of agony."

soon there was a
knock on the door, and
soon another, and
they started arriving —
many of the famous:
a famous cartoonist, a
famous columnist, a
famous actor ...

soon they were all about,
especially in the
patio where food was
being served.

I'm lucky to be here,
I thought, I could never
afford a place like
this.

I told the lady that
I was retiring
early
and I took a fifth of
whiskey to the bedroom,
had a few drinks
in the dark
then switched on
her cable tv
and watched it while
finishing the
fifth

after the lady went
to work the next
day

I got into my car
and drove slowly
out of those
Hollywood hills
knowing I'd never
go back there

and I got back
into town
to my front court
with the busted
windows
and I got inside

locked the door
got a tall
can of beer
from the refriger-
ator
opened it
had a hit
sitting there at
10:30 a.m.
on that
derelect couch

it was one of the
best cans of beer
I ever
tasted.

MY DOCTOR

I walked into the waiting room.
it was full.
mostly of old
dying women.

I went up to the reception-
ist:

"where the hell is he?"

"I don't know," she said,
"he hasn't phoned in or
anything.
these people have been
waiting for hours."

I walked out and down the
stairway,
got into my car and
drove to the
racetrack.

I parked, paid for clubhouse,
went in
and saw him standing there with
a hotdog and a beer.

he saw me: "Henry, can I buy
you a
hotdog and a beer?"

"listen," I told him, "I was
waiting in your office.
you weren't there but

there were
eleven old dying women
in your waiting room."

"Martha will give them new
appointments," he said.

I walked over to the stands,
sat down and
studied the Form

my doctor appeared with a
hotdog and a beer.
"for you," he said.

"thank you," I said.

"it gets so depressing,"
he told me, "there's this
old woman, she's got
cancer of the ass.
anybody else would die!
she just won't die!
I don't know what to
do with her!"

"bill her," I said.

"Martha takes care of
that," he answered.
"who do you like in
this race?"

"I favor the six,"
I told him.

"the nine should win
by daylight," he said.
"by the way, why did you
make an appointment to
see me?"

"cancer of the ass,"
I told him.

"you're a very funny
man," he said. "you're
one of my favorite
patients.

"have you ever screwed
Martha?" I asked.

"of course," he answered,
"you like her?"

"except when she bills
me," I told him.

"I think it's the nine
horse," he said.

"you already bet?"
I asked.

"sure," he said.

I got up to bet,
came back
just in time to
see them break
from the gate —
which my six
stumbled
getting out
of.

anyhow, the nine
won by daylight.

my doctor got up
to cash.

I tried to remember
what I had gone
to see him
about.

then he was back
he handed me another
hotdog and beer.
then he sat
down.

he started talking
about what
a horrible woman
his wife
was.

— Charles Bukowski
San Pedro CA