KING OF SPRING

He's black and blind, always impeccably dressed, suit, button-down white shirt and blue and red striped tie, walking in front of me with this beautiful blind blonde, white pantyhose, white leather sandals, talking the whole time, she listens, he's got her by one arm, in his free hand a white cane with a red tip, walking fast, imperceptibly feeling the beginning of grass/sidewalk edge, at one point he twirls the cane in his hand for a moment like it's a baton, King of Spring, and just watching him I'm King for a moment too.

UNPLUGGING THE DRAIN

It was the first hot day of Spring and the refrigerator finally died, I heroically went in and emptied everything out, the wilted cabbage and exotic salad dressings, a dish of broccoli and carrot bits left over from a party we'd had two weeks earlier ... we hardly ever eat at home, everything into the garbage disposal and that's that.

Two hours later Bernadette tells me "It's all plugged up ... the sink." She works on it for an hour, I'm trying to watch a program on Elizabeth Bishop, finally give up, go upstairs and get the toilet plunger, into the kitchen, one, two, three, four, five,
six,
snap,
the water goes down,
crisis over,
came back into the living
room and started watching my
show again,
she looks at me with hatred,
"You'd like to kill me
wouldn't you?" I ask.
"Yes."
Of course I didn't JUST
unplug the drain did I,
that's not the way I DO
things.

— Hugh Fox
East Lansing MI

OLD PHOTOS: 2

Here's a picture of my dad only 6 years old
standing on a vacant lot in Indianapolis
the buildings on the verge of falling down behind him.
"I can't believe they're still standing there," he says.
"And that people still live in them."
He'd been back there last summer he tells me
just to see what kind of progress 50 years would make.
"The old neighborhood still looks the same," he assures me,
easing back into the sofa. "Only the people are different."
I think back to all the stories he used to tell me
about breadlines & cabbage soup
& suddenly it's easier to see why
he'd want to live in a big 2-story house with a fireplace
drive an air-conditioned car
& look for ultimate contentment in a job he hated
8 hours a day 5 days a week 48 weeks a year 39 years to
retirement.
Back then it was totally immaterial to suburban-born me
that I got here just in time
to enjoy the world's highest standard of living
& was a teenaged credit card carrying member
of the first American generation to grow up on T.V.
& shag carpets.
The first thing I wanted to do
the very first minute I was old enough to do it
was to break out from all this suffocating opulence
& run wild in the open air
pursue the bluejean bhikku life
be a genuine wandering tennis-shoed mendicant