

I USED TO DRINK MAD DOG TWENTYTWENTY

i'd take pictures of black people and sell them  
to art journals in new york and california;

they would pay me two hundred dollars for each  
photo — telling me to get shots of them sitting  
on broken-down cars, drinking budweiser and  
smoking cigarettes:

i'd ask them if i could take some photos and  
they would crowd around, offering me beer and  
potato chips, thinking i'd make them  
famous

china was never like this; thunderbird in the  
park; chocolate peonies in my veins

this and crack are worlds apart — mad dog's  
disciples don't suffer from anything more  
permanent than blood-shot eyes and bad breath;

lost cars and misplaced women — you know

walk with me down this street; don't look  
too close — don't shove back, it's six-thirty  
in new orleans and a large colored woman  
hollers at us about white folks cum —

new orleans when it's wet, the churches all  
look like cathedrals, stained glass with mold  
growing in the corners and several of the  
apostles crying; i

used to drink mad dog twentytwenty, now  
i just drink

DANNY

so i got this job; calling up  
people for donations to the  
disabled american veterans

i called a hotel in new orleans  
today; got a vet told me his name  
was danny and that he was getting  
drunk on his disability check and  
that o yeah he lost his legs for  
me in vietnam

there were a lot of other vets there;  
making noise in the background,

danny said that they were all  
getting drunk on their  
disability checks

i tried to imagine the scene;  
one guy without an arm, this  
guy with only one eye, danny  
with no legs

i was thinking, i'm talking to  
a man who has no legs, how  
the hell can i hit up a man  
who has no legs?

i don't even remember vietnam;  
i'm not sure what we were  
fighting for

danny doesn't either — he was  
only doing what he was told  
he was just a kid

and now he just wants to get drunk  
and forget; glad that his government  
would pay for it

i wrote his number down before i  
got off the phone, thinking that  
i might call him up some night  
when i was good and drunk

before i hung up danny said  
that they'd drink a few for me

cheers, danny — cheers.

#### WASHINGTON STORY

washington isn't a street here but  
i feel that it  
should be

walking south on speedway  
(which is)  
and being  
(continuously)  
caught up in the  
aliveness of it all

with the tattoo parlor and the  
girlie places and the  
large cars; all with