

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