

## THE STAR

I was drunk and they  
got me out of my car  
put the bracelets on  
and made me lie down  
on the roadway  
in the rain.

they stood in their  
yellow raincoats  
cops from 3  
squadcars.

the water soaked  
into my clothing.  
I looked up  
at the moon through  
the raindrops,  
thinking,  
here I am  
62 years old  
and being  
protected  
from myself  
again.

earlier that night  
I had attended the  
opening  
of a movie  
which portrayed the  
life of a drunken  
poet:  
me.

this then was  
my critical review  
of their  
effort.

## PROBLEMS

I go to  
this place to get a  
foot rub-down to  
release the  
toxins.  
the masseur has good  
hands,  
gets to talking.  
well, it's about his bad  
experiences with

women.  
they ask him for  
money.  
he has a good  
heart.  
he gives it to them  
but they won't give  
him  
any snatch.  
been married  
twice, shackled  
once.  
shack lasted two and  
one half  
years.  
she got more and more  
negative.  
every time she  
opened her mouth it  
was something  
critical.  
kind of like having  
poisoned darts  
shot at you  
night and day.

"how you doing with  
the ladies?" he  
asks.

"about the same."

"am I putting too much  
pressure there?"

"yeah, you're just about  
killing me ...."

"that's your  
liver ...."

he works away and  
talks away.  
we are on  
Avenida del Norte in  
the Hollywood Riviera.  
it is a 3 p.m.  
Tuesday  
and I haven't written  
anything decent  
in a couple  
of weeks.

"I recently met this



Chinese wench," he  
says, "and ...."

"OW! CHRIST!"

"that's your  
pancreas," he  
says.

"thanks," I tell  
him, "move over to  
the kidneys ...."

#### LONDON BRIDGES

"London Bridges falling down,  
falling down! ...

all  
fall  
DOWN!"

and the little girls  
would all fall  
on their butts  
laughing

and I'd see their  
panties

then we'd get up,  
hold hands  
and  
circle:

"London Bridges falling down,  
falling down! ...

all  
fall  
DOWN!"

and I'd see their  
panties  
again.

"Hey, Henry," the guys  
would say to me,  
"you're always playing  
with  
the girls!"

"you guys are too

tough for me," I'd  
tell them.

they liked that.

and my mother would  
ask, "Henry, how come  
the backs of your  
pants  
always have  
grass stains?"

"what stains,  
Mom?"

you don't know the  
trouble I had  
just to see  
those  
panties

and it's never  
stopped.

A CAT IS A CAT IS A CAT IS  
A CAT

she's whistling and clapping  
for the cats  
at 2 a.m.  
as I sit in here  
with my wine and my  
Beethoven.

"they're just prowling," I  
tell her ....

Beethoven rattles his bones  
in majesty

and those damn cats  
don't even care  
about  
any of that

and  
if they did  
I wouldn't like them  
at  
all:

things begin to lose their  
natural value