

CERVANTES ORDERS A CERVEZA

he knew how to do it
in Castilian
"thervethah con gathiotha"
it was a very hot day
the beer & mineral water went down well
it gave him time
to reflect about his place
in world lit
right between Céline & Defoe
all 3 into male bonding
before it all turned into the buddy picture
another beer Mike?

I THOUGHT IT WAS MY BIG SHOT

we were working at The Flamingo Lodge
in the Everglades
4 hours a day
free room & board
it was the dinner meal from 5 to 9
there were 8 or 9 stations
we were rotated every night
I kept getting this one family
no matter what station I worked
they always had wine with their meal
I wasn't so good at opening bottles then
they took my fumbling with good cheer
it was Louis Auchincloss & his family
I'd never heard of him
his wife asked me to send her some of my work
she wrote out their Park Avenue address
she read me
I read her husband
end of story

THE MEDICAL MIND IN ACTION

my doctor resembles Alan Bates
he has a beard
& does his best
to simulate sensitivity
he was 25 minutes late for our appointment
I had brought along
one of my contributors' copies
just for him
it was a mistake
watching him gush & goo & patronize

he couldn't shut up about it
I walked out of there
convinced
that one must take great care
when deciding
just WHO should be allowed to read poetry

WISDOM HAS BECOME A WELTER OF GENERALIZATIONS

we toss around millions
of people
on the end of our tongues
that's the price
of armchair omnipotence
we're bludgeoned with images
of disarray
local news amounts to local crime time
you'd think there's nothing else
but horror
& yet
day after day
on the streets of metropolitan Boston
I see people quietly going about
their business
or clogging the streets
by the thousands
as they Walk For Hunger
Run For Real Estate
or Bike For Buicks
absurdity & madness
the twin pillars of our age

ONE OF THOSE MOODS THAT CAN LAST FOR YEARS

I've gone thru times
when I've given money to any jackoff
with a sad story
that includes Oxfam
Disabled Vets
lung disease
these days I pass
countless people on the streets
working their posts
waiting for fresh sympathy
today was Harvard commencement
caps & gowns clog the streets
the street people line the benches
I average about \$5000 a year
without health coverage
why in the hell should I feel guilty