

little creatures like this
mean more to me than
most people do

RAINY NIGHT

"straight
no chaser"
red light
rain-speckled windscreen
car radio jazz poem
scrawled as I wait
for green to go

poetry
can happen
anywhere
anytime
anyhow

JAPAN

I liked the way
colored guys said
motherfucker in Japan

it was good getting
to know Negroes
in the Marines
in Japan

& Mexicans
Polacks
Jews
etc

I know it ain't
fashionable but
a lot of good
things happened
to me in the Marines
in Japan

I discovered Whitman
Dostoyevsky
cherry blossoms
streetgirls
whores
bars

I became a poet
in the Marines
in Japan

GOOD GUY POEM

when I found CRIME & PUNISHMENT
& LEAVES OF GRASS in Japan
a Marine corporal
in the Military Police
I was a good guy
in a bad job

I went back to high school
on the G.I. Bill
then on to college
eventually I became
a graduate school dropout

I quit work
I quit marriage
I quit the gym
I quit my car
I quit rent
I quit just about everything
all I wanted to do was read & write

I became hooked on freedom
hooked on the gamble of the poem
hooked on the fire of living on the edge

I was a good guy
in a good job

SHALE POEM

I still have a piece
of striated
blue-gray shale
I found in a ditch
I was digging
as a laborer
in Caloundra
22 years ago

I'm a sucker
for magic
mementos