

## White Hair Dogs

Two white hair covered dogs  
whose skin underneath  
spread from mottled grey to black  
makes a canvas for the brilliant light.

I would never have called you out;  
but now I know  
you waited for me to say your name  
if not in tender pardon  
at least when lunging to your face  
I was silent never sure –  
the brown nylon threads  
wove swirls in my hair  
from the carpet on your floor  
upon which we knelt to pray and sing  
caught in anger and contempt  
that losing love condemns  
whatever hope and gentle soul  
still within us hides.  
My fingers played the fiber's twines  
your face soft and empty  
waiting I guess now  
for words that would holler in tomorrow;  
for the time right then was lost  
in sweat, hard labor moving to a sorrow  
that for me also was the end  
but to you only a withered bridge  
between ecstasy and pain  
wherein the morrow  
a day not certain and sometimes never came  
it would have been so simple  
to right that which lay amiss  
to draw up after we exhausted and frail collapsed  
your name then would have been the difference.  
So now, I fumble in the black  
contours that your arms left in scar  
I sing in silence your name  
still not aloud for fear of  
the fall.

**In The Night**  
**Star Stuck**  
**Revenged The Sun**

He sings of kisses and lonely hearts  
of tear dewed eyes in moonlit glow  
everywhere women watch  
his grey ghost face  
breasts heave clammy and hot  
they hum along with his scratchy bass  
in Peoria,  
Schenectady,  
and Santa Fe  
caught by the ether flung into space  
silver shivers on the Emerson.

Geritol and Lipton Tea  
mix with isotopes and diffy-qs  
men jabber and watch  
the console's wistful lights  
pushing buttons, twisting knobs,  
they play on giant Sega's  
Generals of the Milky Way  
and dream -  
dream of power beyond love  
beyond the savage heat between a woman's legs  
that they as young men kissed and flamed  
now blind to all but the reactor's shake  
old rattled men imagine and pray  
that they control the gamma rays.

A doctor of philosophy will note  
in a treatise on the reactor's crumbling down  
crumbling down  
his ukulele was flat that night -  
or was the ether simply warped  
by the plasm's particle streams  
disarrayed by the fires and the screams?

Big men in dungarees sit silent  
their fat jowls frozen in fear  
by the sudden light  
that the trembling beneath their feet

brings their death tonight  
his grainy voice lilts between the ukulele notes  
the wind hot blows through the floors  
towards the stars and home.

## Ida Dalsler

*Snakes, In My Heart-Blood Warmed*

Richard II

April in Milano wet and cold  
she snips and tucks, kneads and folds  
soft grey hair plumed against  
garrets and puckered air.  
Bennie sits and stares  
chewing figs and lemon skins  
disgust curls her lips snick snack  
his heart roars in his head uncontrolled  
betrayed by his cock  
and history  
snick snack.

He is fearless, a senseless fighter  
sickened by the weak  
and their blubbering lips  
yet now, he is afraid  
of her eyes  
her breath seethes above the old woman's head  
gulps of air  
mock his trebling knees  
she knows, her smoldering eyes dare  
him back to stare.

The sky snakes violet and cream  
sunlight tumbles in  
he speaks, his voice flutters  
in dead air  
singsong words worn and frayed old  
she shrieks  
scissors pierce and weave  
sputtering words creak out - repentance  
but there is no forgiveness  
from either God or Ida  
her screams rip through his chest  
he stumbles  
cursing his heart and  
shaking voice  
and runs.

## The Last Days of Allen Perdeu

He sits silently in the back of the car  
lurching along  
shellacked shell cases roll against empty beer cans  
around the floor.

He ponders three questions:

What is a Kentucky Colonel?

Will there be dogs in Heaven?

Why do men fuck men?

jowls sashaying to the casing's beat  
his eyes stare languid.

He has wandered aimlessly for nearly ten years  
time sizzles, evaporates  
he smells sweet butter burning now, then gone  
warm Miller drizzles his lips, his eyes slow to open to  
trees bouncing up and down, cold mist clouds bare branches.  
Power, people and raw energy  
wrapped him like a chain for 20 years before the ten years  
he ran with the sun  
losing everything in its hot touch  
now it is gone too, probably cold too, he cannot tell.

The road down to the Kentucky River  
is two miles long and after the bottom  
weaves up another two miles on the other side  
a white clapboard church stands on the hill high above the river.  
He goes inside  
four fiddlers play to each other in the basement  
dogs lay asleep perhaps listening

Will there be dogs in heaven?  
he slumps heavily in a pew  
the fiddles fiddle below  
Jesus songs, redemption  
but who saves him now?  
If he had a 'soul', it was lost long before he danced with the sun  
A soul he never knew much less missed  
Jesus saves souls but he has no soul  
no soul, not lost, not damned or  
no soul, forever lost, damned at birth.  
Jesus, he is tired  
the hardness of the wood soothes him.

What is a Kentucky Colonel?

Rotarians

Lions

Shriners

Masons (but they are kinda Shriners aren't they?)

Legionnaires

Big Brothers

Lutherans

well probably not Lutherans.

Dedicated to the common good of the Commonwealth

what does that mean?

Allen has lived his whole life of 67 years and four months and 23 days in the Commonwealth of Kentucky

and he has known a score or two of Colonels

but they strike him as no more dedicated to the common good of the Commonwealth than

his father (who was not a Colonel)

or mother (who was not a Colonel)

or mother's mother or mother's father

or father's mother or father's father

or great great Grand Dad Parker who fought for the Yankees

and none of any of them were Colonels.

So no Kentucky Colonels in his family to dog and question;

the others he knew were dumber than rocks

or at least dumber than himself

so how do you know?

Jeez

Unfathomable.

The pew's hardness digs into his back

The fiddlers are talking, not fiddling, the dogs disappeared, slunk off

He lumbers outside.

An outhouse quietly awaits

for the noisy, stinky duty he does

make doo Allen, his mother purred

he hears her soft voice long gone again

as the shit slides out of him and down the hole

make doo Allen

Thick dicks are better than thin dicks

he doesn't know

his dick is more thin than anything else

though he hasn't seen a lot of guy's dicks to be really sure  
but it got him what he wanted  
and two sons besides  
still, how do you know what you missed?  
he gets all this spam stuff about  
making your dick bigger  
or horny housewives looking right now  
how do they know his age, these spammers  
viagra, calis, levitra – at least a dozen emails for them every day  
and grannies who want anal.  
He has never had anal, he thinks how hot it would be to stick his  
cock up her ass  
but then, it would be dirty and stinky... doo... ugh no, not good  
yet grannies want for anal  
how do they know?

His wife slides into the car next to him  
stiff and cool and smelling of lavender  
he gives space on his right side.  
She murmurs an apology he thinks  
but her voice is too hard to hear to know for sure  
plus the beer changes words on its own  
He tried to re-know her from when he lost it all  
she for twenty years by his side was a stranger then  
he tried to re-know her  
but he found then... then there was little to know  
she changed, he changed, who knew  
who cared – time pushed them both away.  
She was a dot on his i  
when she is there, she usually cries  
she cries about this or that...he doesn't usually know what  
nor care about what  
when he owned the sun, they fucked when he wanted  
good, hot, satisfying fucking for him for sure and he thinks for her  
too  
now he rarely wants and she never cares  
she apologizes for crazy things – her poor eyes, the loose skin  
under her forearm, the bad whisky he bought last year in  
Bardstown  
she makes no sense to him but he spends no time trying to figure it  
out either  
he has himself to push through each day  
to just try to keep himself alive

there's no room in his pockets for another stone  
maybe that is what she is murmuring about...she is sorry she is a  
stone.

Black night descends thick and silent around the car  
it moves slowly on roads unlit, twisty, up and down hills and hollows  
he is out of bullets but it is too dark to shoot anyways  
he pats the gun in his pocket. Another stone.