

I first met Neal not long after my father died... I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won't bother to talk about except that it really had some thing to do with my father's death and my awful feeling that everything was dead. With the coming of Neal there really began for me that part of my life that you could call my life on the road. Prior to that I'd always dreamed of west, seeing the country, always vaguely planning and never specifically taking off and so on. Neal is the perfect guy for the road because he actually was on the road, his parents were passing through Salt Lake City in 1936, a sloppy, a day to Los Angeles. First reports of Neal came to me thru Hal Chase, who I know as a few letters from him written in a Colorado reform school. I was tremendously interested in these letters because they so naively and sweetly asked for Hal to teach him all about Nietzsche and all the wonderful intellectual things that Hal was so justly famous for. At one point Allen: I talked to these letters and wondered if we would ever meet the strange Neal Cassidy. This is a long time back, when Neal wasn't the way he is today, when a young man in mystery. Then news came that Neal was out of school and was coming to New York for the first time; also there was had just married a 16 year old girl called Louanne. One day I was at the Columbia campus and Hal and Ed White told me Neal had just arrived living in a coldwater flat in East Harlem, the first time in NY, with a beautiful little girl. They got off the Greyhound bus at 50 St. and out around the corner looking for a place to eat and went right in Hector's, and since then Hector's cafeteria has always been a big symbol of NY for Neal. They spent some time in the camp. All this time Neal was talking Louanne things like this, "Now darling here we are in NY and and all thought everything that I was thinking about when we crossed Missouri and especially at the point when we passed the Booneville reformatory which reminded me of my jail problem it is absolutely necessary now to postpone all those leftover things concerning our personal lovethings and at once begin thinking of specific work-life plans..." and so on in the way that he had in his early days. I went to the coldwater flat with the boys and Neal came to the door in his shorts. Louanne was jumping off quickly from the bed; apparently he was fucking with her. He always was doing so. This other guy who owned the place mob was there but Neal had apparently dispatched him to the kitchen, probably to make coffee while he proceeded with his loveproblems... for to him sex was the one and only holy and important thing in life, although he had to sweat and curse to make a living, and so on. My first impression of Neal was of a young Gene Autry--trim, thin-nipped, blue eyes, with a real Oklahoma accent. In fact he'd just been working on a ranch, Ed Uni's in Sterling Colo. before marrying L. and coming East. Louanne was a pretty, sweet little thing, but awfully dumb and capable of doing horrible things as she proved a while later. I only mention this first meeting of Neal because of what he did. That night we all drank beer and got drunk and blah-blahed somewhat, slept on the other couch, and in the morning, while we eat around dumbly smoking butts from ashtrays in the gray light of a gloomy day Neal got up nervously, paced around thinking, and decided the thing to do was Louanne's breakfast and sweeping the floor. Then I went away. This was all I knew of Neal at the outset. During the following week however he confided in Hal Chase that he absolutely had to learn how to write from him; Hal said I was a writer and he should come to me for advice. Meanwhile Neal had gotten a job in a parking lot, had a fight with Louanne in their Hoboken apartment God knows why they went there and she was so mad and so vindictive down deep that she reported him to the police, some false trumped up hysterical crazy charge, and Neal had to leave. He had no place to live. Neal came right out to Ozark Park where I was living with my mother, and one night while I was working on my book or my painting or whatever you want to call it there was a knock on the door and there was Max Neal, bowing, snuffling coxquisimly in the dark of the hall, and saying "Hi-lo, you remember me, Neal Cassidy? I've come to ask you to show me how to write." "And where's Louanne?" I asked, and Neal said she'd appa-

On the Found

poetic findings in the American novel

Mike Ferguson

On the Found
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Devon

Some of these poems were previously published in the following poetry magazines/journals: *After the Pause, Angry Old Man, Ol' Chantry*

The Last of the Mohicans – James Fenimore Cooper

Losing Coolness

With the
steady annihilation
of coolness

Great Britain
is no longer
believed,

her blunders
of character a
mortifying

abasement: the
imbecility of
statesmen

disgracefully diffused
had lowered
her fame.

Succeeding

Humility
is the
fiercest
combat

sufficiently above the summits

of
victory

of
songs of triumph

of
shouts of success

of
pride and exultation

of
the evidences of succeeding days

Moby Dick – Herman Melville

The Pythagorean Maxim

Who breathes it first
after extensive performances

gets his atmosphere
from astern,

more prevalent than winds
from any wholesome Providence.

Much the same as a contested performance:
an election for the Presidency of the

United States of Fates
where wailing winds *are*.

Perish

Though tied
to thee,
towards thee
I turn
from lonely life.

I turn
my body
to ye
bold billows
of thou
last ho.

To the
whole
foregone life,
heart
I stab
at thee.

From all you

furthest hearses
thus I am
pointed now,
then tow
lonely death
on.

My
last breath
at thee,
thou and
without me.

Uncle Tom's Cabin – Harriet Beecher Stowe

Low Grammarian

Plentifully yellow,
a thick set man,
he did not seem flourishing
in conversation,
speaking

I is in defiance of Murray's grammar

he said, and, jingling with evident satisfaction

I is quite a low man who is easy of swaggering

and trying to elbow his way to the top, said

I is bedecked with gold

and is
large and coarse
gaudy
portentous
upward in the world

the most authoritative American.

Do Not Die

A story
is most busy
when living

but in real life
all that makes
life
what is commonly called

do not die

is when
people's hearts break

and there is
the end of it.

Little Women – Louisa May Alcott

By Firelight

*Christmas won't
be Christmas
without the poor*

one said

on which the
cheerful words
brightened them.

*It's fair for some girls
to have plenty of pretty
when other girls
have nothing*

added the other
contentedly.

The firelight shone
but their thinking
and words
darkened all.

Spinster Love

Having missed ambition,
the sweetest part of life
is in the beautiful faces of
hidden spinsters –

even the sad
beat love so quietly
under the many silent sacrifices
of romance.

The Portrait of a Lady – Henry James

Occasions

The persons concerned in consideration of finished pleasure have on certain occasions a *little eternity*, a leisure in life of brilliant colours, a dense pattern long upon the smooth ceremony of unconscious sex. We should call it the *perfect dusk*, known also as *to ebb* in these circumstances, shadows of an old man who smoked cigarettes when grown mellow on such a privilege. On this occasion a part of the afternoon was left, itself delightful, and time for tea with his face turned to a large cup, and now a little feast of a different quality at this interval for an elder, and what had waned was with much circumspection votaries of when shadows were.

I Am

It has made my life:
my loving you properly,
I am now wiser.

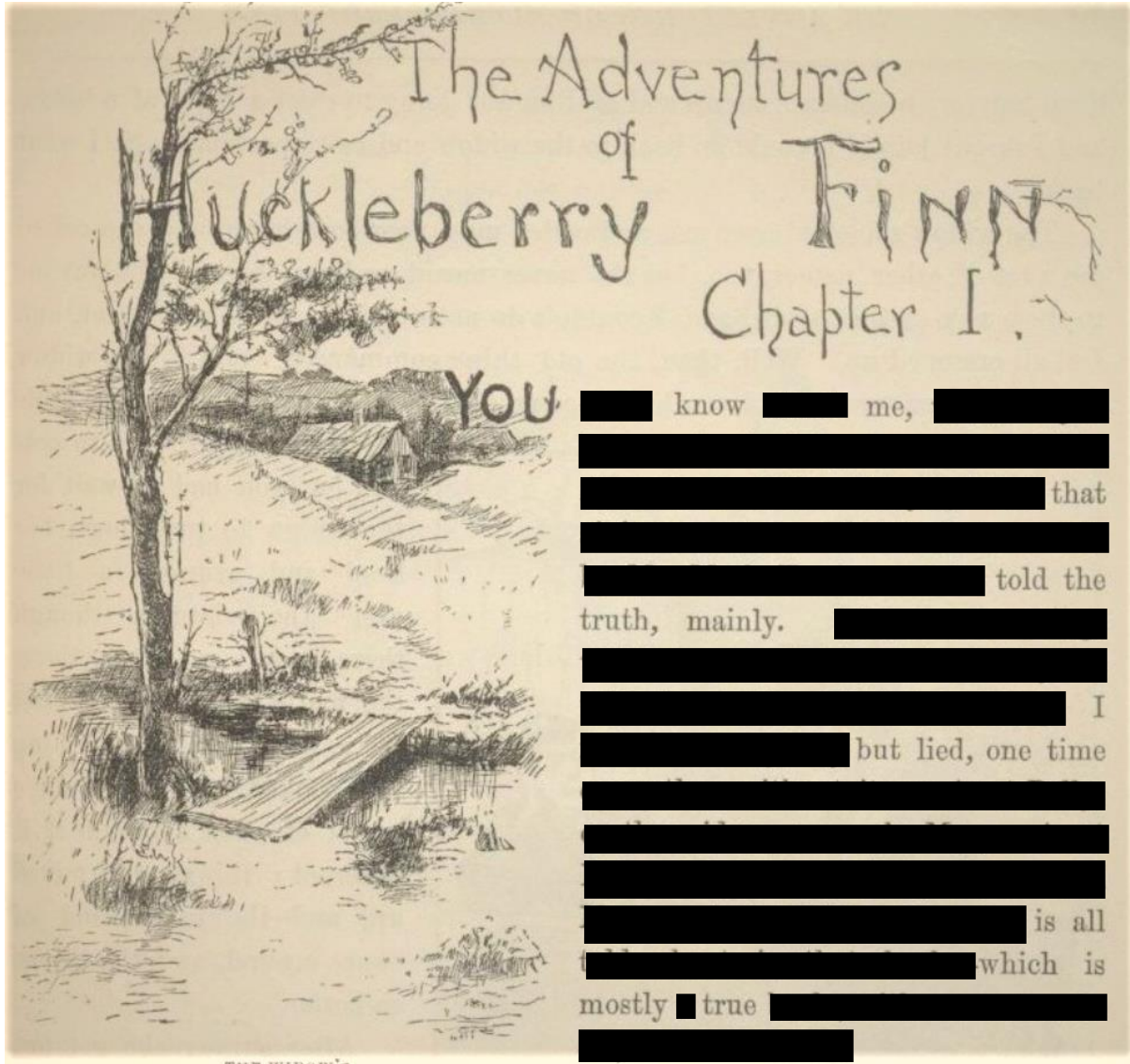
I am now wiser:
this delightful satisfied,
it made me, really.

It made me, really:
I used to want delightful,
now I really am.

Now I really am:
subject to irritation,
it has made my life.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn – Mark Twain

Redacted



Knowned

A-floating along, I
knowed I was going
to hell and such-like

I knowed His'n 'stead
of calling me was
singing me down the river

I come to being lost
in other night-time places to
harden me against good

And when I come by
moonlight and could pray
all washed clean of sin

I knowed straight off
such-like times would be
a-floating by to hell

How near I come to being
a-float in a good river
I knowed was always lost

Knowed

**A-floating along, I
knowed I was going
to hell and such-like**

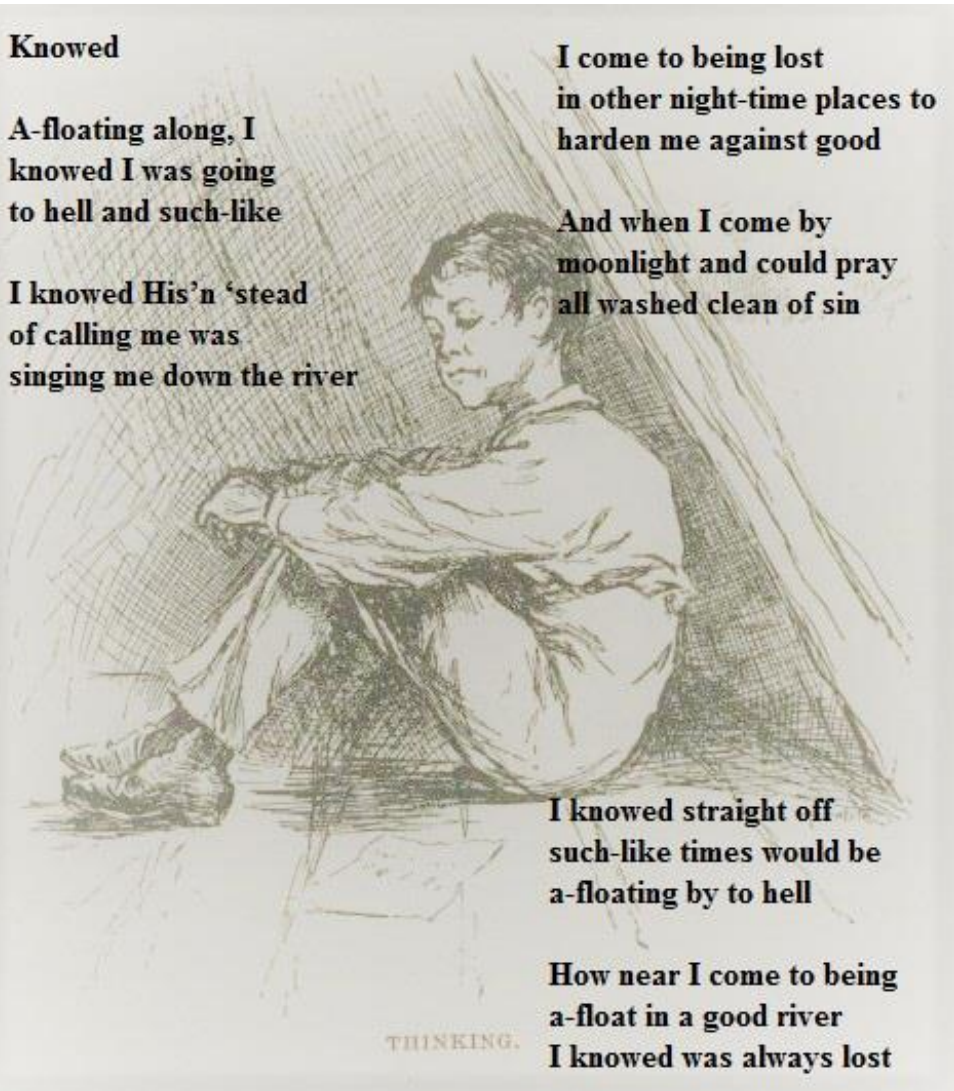
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such-like times would be
a-floating by to hell**

**How near I come to being
a-float in a good river
I knowed was always lost**



THINKING.

The Red Badge of Courage – Stephen Crane

Be No More

drilled and drilled
and twiddled

be a hero

months of monotonous life
with smalltime
religious education

be a hero

patted and
complimented

be a hero

death struggles

be a hero

smiles of the girls
and old men

be a hero

months of
life meals

be a hero

a little war
growing within

be a hero

lavish expenditure

be a hero

secular education of
pickles and cheese

be a hero

fed and caressed

be a hero

for the youth
had believed
old ideas

Gospel

All his life
he had rid himself
of flowers,
and from war

now in the past,
he turned with
recollection
to this,

as with gospels,
seeing them as scars
faded with
eternal peace,

and despised them.
With this
conviction, he
took assurance from

that war, an
existence of changed
recollection, and
turned from that past.

It was as if the
earlier gospels
were a weary chatter
about elation

and now

the vivid error
was blistered in
youth's veins.

Winesburg, Ohio – Sherwood Anderson

The Writer

the writer
interested in figures
began to write
and a procession
of grotesques
crept out of
the writer
before his eyes

at least a small
dream
like a small grotesque
of figures
before his eyes
concerning his thoughts
some almost beautiful

the figures
crept out of the
old writer
once quite handsome
who had been in love
with a long procession
of life

he began to write
he had known people
many different from
the figures
not all horrible
some almost

he had known them
in his eyes
he imagined the eyes
of the writer

you see
the interest in figures
that went before
were the people in his mind

who for an hour
became grotesques
in his head
sleepy but still conscious

and when they passed
during his dream
that was not in the eyes of
the writer
they made his bed

when they passed
and made his bed

Wind

Suddenly something happens:
he is thinking of the future,
the line into manhood

calling his name.
Every boy waits for a voice
in the street of his town,

of his village, from out of
nothingness, like a leaf
blown in wind, by the

limitations of the lived,
and his future becomes it,
blown by a voice through

the world to stop under a tree.
In his village, merely a leaf,
that in spite of a thing blown

has come out of nothingness.
A little gasp, he sees all of
the street talk of life,

a thing destined like it is
blown by the wind through the
limitations of life, calling.

The Great Gatsby – F Scott Fitzgerald

Might Have Been

The silhouette
of a lone figure
fifty feet away
might have been
the end of him

but for the
pools of light
that made
an introduction.

But it distinguished
nothing, and
though full bellows
of moonlight.
blew its intimation

this shadow
of movements
abandoned a position
into the earth.

I didn't call to him
as it might
have been me.

One

One where
dark
fields
stretch
out
ceaselessly
into the unknown.

One where
obscurity
is beyond
tomorrow

year by
year.

One where
what recedes
is somewhere
back in what
we did not know.

One where
brooding wonder
is vast against
the future.

One where
the end is rolled under
what is already.

One where
it is already behind.

Christ

Light and by day, the tasks and cares, then the soothing Christ lived the comes with the "All men are sinners in the light of the Lord," he declared. "Unless they repent, unless they accept Christ, His love and forgiveness of them, they can hearten, to bind cares of all! And understanding, that the comfort, the the If you could

If you could but know the peace and content that comes with the knowledge, the inward understanding, that Christ lived and died for you and that He walks with you every day and hour, by light and by dark, at dawn and at dusk, to keep and strengthen you for the tasks and cares of the world that are

walks with you and Oh, the happiness of being snares and are sinners in the pitfalls that beset us all! whole "All men Lord," love and forgiveness of the And then the alls that beset us us whole! Us us soothing the peace, keep and strengthen y realization world that are ever they can never ever with us, before you. The to counsel, to aid, to to he declared.] hearten, to ed. "Unless they repent, up our w bind up our nake realization that Christ is eve wounds and ver. That Christ make us whole! Oh, the peace, the satisfaction,

Titus Republican

A Titus of blunder,
man of the world without
ever quite getting it,

he was a Republican
because his native type was a
religion that reveres illusion,

an Americanism
which resists facts,
the *otherwise* of right and wrong.

He was an individual willed –
where conventions and morals go –
as nebulous as vast companies.

The Sun Also Rises – Ernest Hemingway

Critics

He wrote many books
some that had been poor

about people living in Europe
and novels about woman

one should marry if they
played tennis and bridge.

When read in America,
he found critics called him

the one that boxed
I do not believe fairly.

Bull

Romero's bullfighting
was ridiculous,

a faked look of purity
as if a beautiful feeling

was attainable in killing.
An emotional pass would

emphasize their closeness
and safe exposure,

him and bull
bull and him

Romero and horns
horns and Romero,

but it was bull
in the absolute killing.

As I Lay Dying – William Faulkner

Good Carpenter

I gives the trestle
these boards

yellow as gold

and makes soft
along the shadow spaces,

smooth undulations
for a better box to be.

I am a good carpenter.

When I reach for the
adze blade

I squints along the edge
of the boards together

a good carpenter

and holds the two planks
in confidence and comfort.

I Am Is

I must empty
am not emptied yet
I don't know what I was
I don't know if I
emptied am
I don't know
I could not empty myself
Emptied then I
must be
or not
What are you
What are you
You never were
And so if I am
you are not
And is not

I am or not
Am or not
So is or not

I am *is*.

Gone With the Wind – Margaret Mitchell

Secession

War is
men's business,
not thought
the less of
by femininity

unless it's
ladies in the
Troop,

for one word
Rights

has ruined the
war of gentlemen.

Frank'ly

[found mash-up with 1828 *Webster's Dictionary*]

was never there
frankly,

a fragment
from Luke

as broken as damned
sentimentalities.

So starting all over
to give a care:

*My dear, it's
best to mend fragments,
glue them together
as new,*

a clean slate
from Frank,

an adverb for
ingenuous repair.

USA – John Dos Passos

Holding Company

USA
is the world's greatest
aggregation

of river valleys
fringed with
bank accounts

of bound uniforms

of men buried in their
Westerns

of protests
scrawled in laws
dog-eared and
history

of too many too many too many

of rubbed out
margins

of *world* written in
letters, but mostly
USA

Natural Selection

America
got wind
they had died:

trying to influence
in a wasp's nest,
they had been stung

dead –
hybrid, infidel
evil, this

wasp-Selection
buried America,
Darwin daisies

blooming beside
what they did.
Wasps!

Congregations of,
they believed in
their churches,

infidels,
a volcano of
evil

with never
a thought for Santa
or America.

Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck

In The Sun

Here
you could have some,

think of the
swell times,

leave the darkness
across the river

and get in the sun.

First chance,
across the river
in the hills

and it'd be nice.

If you didn't want me
I'd go nuts.

I never could have lived
without you.

Almost

The valley was bluer
and the evening and skull
were joined

while on the wind
the shadow
giggled with happiness.

The little evening breeze
sounded again.
Voices came close.

Wind waves flowed
for a moment with
footsteps in the brush, now

closer than before.

The spinevoice called from
up the river,

turned and looked
toward them, and leaves
rustled a little.

A sound of crashing
reached into the darkening,
listening with the distance,

and the shadow in the happiness
giggled so you could
almost see it, almost reach it.

The Grapes of Wrath – John Steinbeck

Intercalary

1. Dust

Dust
and
dust
and
dust

What'll we do?

2. Turtle

Oat beard
grass heads
and turtle,
tiddly-winks of
the same coin,
passive and
spun

3. Preacher

*Full of the Holy
in the grass,
here's me preachin'
with eyes of dust*

4. Owner

To profit the dust
some worshipped
mathematics

but God knows
what measured men
squatting in dust

5. Ruins

*Like jalopies
bustin' with sawdust –*

*Christ, what they is
jus' sold is*

*God Almighty
folks in ruins*

Got To

Hand beside him
she took his,
slowly lay down and
drew the comfort
still in her
tired body, and
in the wasted barn
bared her rose

The Big Sleep – Raymond Chandler

Knight in Dark Armor

A knight
in powder-blue suit,

but look of hard –
a sober yet
dark detective –

was he rescuing,
being sociable
in mid-October?

If she had
no clothes on
he was trying
what ought to be,
no fiddling.

A glass panel,
the knight
would not
have her stained.

Sleep

we're sleeping
the big sleep
gray as dead

bothered by
rusty things
sleep things
gray things
dead things

waiting in
the big sleep
sleeping in
the waiting
you just slept
the big sleep

or where you
fell uncertain

nastiness and
ashes
nastiness and
swamp
nastiness and
not caring

part of the
high nastiness

lie quiet in
the big sleep

part of it
the nastiness
of how you died
and things
like that

lie dead
in the big
uncertain
gray as sleep

Native Son – Richard Wright

If You Break

Slapping it up:
the poster with
a finger pointed
straight out
and red letters

IF YOU BREAK THE

Passer-bys gathered he was running again,
running for wet brushes

I bet he's running
from a passer-by

I bet he is
from a passer-by too

That sonofabitch is
running for wet brushes

One more poster
showed the finger
and with red letters

YOU BREAK THE

From a passer-by,
unblinkingly,
I bet a million bucks
he's running for wet brushes!

Life

Life draped
in a form of
processes and
laws

is distorted life.

Plead with life,
beg of it to be
springing

from a soil

from a collective

from our own hands

human plowed and sown

flowing from such
a condition of
life

life that
expresses itself

prepared by people
by a hundred million people
by a hundred million hundred million
people

not stunted by the will of
one

The Catcher in the Rye – JD Salinger

Football Girls

A pretty girl
giggling or something
there were never many girls
mad with desire

for what I liked,
conversation.

No matter how you looked
if you struck up
a conversation
sat next to a football girl

she didn't give a
manure for this.

Poetry

Human behaviour
is poetry,

a beautiful reciprocal
education,

the happily
and the frightened –

a poetry when
among other things

you are
stimulated to know.

By no means alone,
a person who was

ever confused
will learn something

when poetry is
human behaviour.

Invisible Man – Ralph Ellison

Not Invisible

They Edgar Allan Poe me,
as if I am a
bio-chemical accident,
sound and anguish and epidermis,
haunted –

I am a phantom man
in other people's minds.

I am not invisible.
I am a figure in
nightmare bone,
distorting what
people see with
their inner eyes.

They sideshow me,
as if I am an
ectoplasm of fiber,
epidermis and anguish and sound,
bodiless –

I am a phantom man
in the disposition of matter.

I am not invisible.
I am a reality in
ached nerves,
protesting that
people see with
their spooked eyes.

Lack of Color

Colorlessness.

Seriously?

The word *colorlessness*?

In America?

In white tyrant states?

Whence this passion
towards woven strands
of colorlessness?

Whence this conformity
to the many parts
of being invisible?

Color is.

Diversity is.

Think of what
would happen,

to end by
not a color
but the
lessness.

I first met Neal not long after my father died. I had just gotten over a serious illness that I won't bother to talk about except that it really had some thing to do with my father's death and my awful feeling that everything was dead. With the coming of Neal there really began for me that part of my life that you could call my life on the road. Prior to that I'd always dreamed of west, seeing the country, always vaguely planning and never specifically taking off and so on. Neal is the perfect guy for the road because he actually was on the road, when his parents were passing through Salt Lake City in 1926, in a jalopy, on their way to Los Angeles. First reports of Neal came to me thru Hal Chase, who'd shown me a few letters from him written in a Colorado reform school. I was tremendously interested in these letters because they so naively and sweetly asked for Hal to teach him all about Nietzsche and all the wonderful intellectual things that Hal was so justly famous for. At one point Allen I talked about these letters and wondered if we would ever meet the strange Neal Cassidy. This is all far back, when Neal wasn't the way he is today, when a young jailbird shrouded in mystery. Then news came that Neal was out of school and was coming to New York for the first time; also there was word that he had just married a 16 year old girl called Louanne. One day I was at the Columbia campus and Hal and Ed White told me Neal had just arrived living in a guy called Bob Maikin's coldwater pad in East Harlem, the East Harlem. Neal had arrived the night before, the first time in NY, with a beautiful little snappy chick Louanne; they got off the Greyhound bus at 50 St. and cut around the corner looking for a place to eat and went right in Hector's, and since then Hector's cafeteria has always been a big symbol of NY for Neal. They spent money on beautiful big glazed cakes and cream puffs. All this time Neal was telling Louanne things like this, "now darling here we are in NY and and all thought I haven't quite told you everything that I was thinking about when we crossed Missouri and especially at the point when we passed the Booneville reformatory which reminded me of my jail problem it is absolutely necessary now to postpone all those leftover things concerning our personal lovethings and at once begin thinking of specific worklife plans..." and so on in the way that he had in his early days. I went to the coldwater flat with the boys and Neal came to the door in his shorts. Louanne was jumping off quickly from the bed; apparently he was fucking with her. He always was doing so. This other guy who owned the place Bob Maikin was there but Neal had apparently dispatched him to the kitchen, probably to make coffee while he proceeded with his loveproblems... for to him sex was the one and only holy and important thing in life, although he had to sweat and curse to make a living, and so on. My first impression of Neal was of a young Gene Autry—trim, thin-nipped, blue eyes, with a real Oklahoma accent. In fact he'd just been working on a ranch, Ed Uni's in Sterling Colo. before marrying Louanne and coming East. Louanne was a pretty, sweet little thing, but awfully dumb and capable of doing horrible things, as she proved a while later. I only mention this first meeting of Neal because of what she did. That night we all drank beer and got drunk and blah-blashed somewhat, slept on the other couch, and in the morning, while we sat around dumbly smoking butts from ashtrays in the gray light of a gloomy day Neal got up nervously, paced around thinking, and decided the thing to do was Louanne making breakfast and sweeping the floor. Then I went away. This was all I knew of Neal at the outset. During the following week however he confided in Hal Chase that he absolutely had to learn how to write from him; Hal said I was a writer and he should come to me for advice. Meanwhile Neal had gotten a job in a parking lot, had a fight with Louanne in their Hoboken apartment God knows why they went there and she was so mad and so vindictive down deep that she reported him to the police, some false trumped up hysterical crazy charge, and Neal had to leave from Hoboken. So he had no place to live. Neal came right out to Central Park where I was living with my mother, and one night while I was working on my book or my painting or whatever you want to call it there was a knock on the door and there was kmax Neal, bowing, shuffling coxequiously in the dark of the hall, and saying "Hal-lo, you remember me, Neal Cassidy? I've come to ask you to show me how to write." "And where's Louanne?" I asked, and Neal said she'd appa-

I Could Hear

A mouthswarm
of the indescribable,

the uncreated,

I could hear
I could hear

moth

but ripples and
radiancies
and mirror-like
sounds

created,

a heroin wind of sound
mainlined to the mind

reborn.

I could hear the angels of sound
swarm.

The Adventures of Augie March – Saul Bellow

Curl-wired Fence of Fate

Fate is dragfooted
along the curl-wired fence

says a somber Heraclitus,
freestyle.

There is no own way:
you go and end there.

The thing you hold down
is suppression;

suppression adjoining
the thing you hold down.

Sometimes an innocent
simple-minded nature

will record the order
of the knocks,

but a man's character was
born to make the record.

Our World Version

Artists are
make-believe,

invention and
image and

humanity, power
with more force

than millions and
millions of others,

as with the
actuality chiefs

of what's real
and mere greatest

number. Recruit
to our version:

believe to
make artists.

To Kill a Mockingbird – Harper Lee

People Said

Mutilated
phantoms from
Crazy Addie's yard

peeped in children's
windows and drowned
household pets

people said.

Their malevolent
nocturnal events
will kill you

when the moon
was nuts
and azaleas froze

people said.

Terrorized,
the town once
lay unwilling chickens

in Crazy Addie's yard,
but their suspicions
went untouched

people said.

Come Closer

The neighbourhood was busy
enacting summertime

though it was Fall.
Children raced

to their own apprehension
of winter

and the night's heart break
was a blazing house.

The fishing pole man
approaching in the distance

stopped and watched.
The man waved.

At the front gates
this little drama

was the latest to
tell the children

come closer, come closer:
this is our invention.

Rabbit, Run – John Updike

Boys Are Playing

So tall
he seems sinister,
a business adult
walking up the alley,
still and
unlikely.

Six three
he is strange,
was a boy
playing in the alley,
basketball and
one of him.

Twenty six
he feels nervous,
still the kid
standing in an alley,
no nickname and
double-breasted.

The Blow Sucks

The unbearable
force of a wrong

incoherent and
rigid,

you futile in a
universe holding this.

Kicking, slaps, battling –
each emptier against

the injustice;
the power of it.

You well up
but do not quite dare

cry, holding on
from behind the blood.

Once tall
– six three –

the red burst makes
you inches shorter.

Gravity's Rainbow – Thomas Pynchon

Bananas

In *The Pick Banana*

bananery, you
have to be fast

to count
only bananas
at the speed of sound.

They travel faster
than a
Commando missile:

count one,
in a split second
the ripest are pickling.

It's tropical twilight
as yellow
blasts by to black –

banana chandeliers
leave a contrail of shit
like a missile strike.

Rainbow Aphorisms

Taking
and not
giving is back

Meanness
understands a
returning profit

Dreams
can resource
by buying supply

Productivity
and earnings
deliver the Chain

Anything
is amiable
but the System

Cynicism
is process
driven by humanity

Removing
soul from
innocent is increasing

Profit
is energy
riding the fraction

Only
addiction surrounds
the productivity mouth

In
this World
demanding is vast

The
System keeps
it desperate too

Holding
its tail
cycles the Chain

JR – William Gaddis

Cut-Up

Everybody is their own
dismantling artist
in the binary system

of God and technology, piece
of value by piece of computer
divided and layered back as

clippings and deeds of cut-up –
disorder sorted and
organized to

collapse into entertainment.
It is the business of
these notes about this book.

god damned

he'd smashed and god damned words finally going through his head
finally he'd damned words smashed through his head and going god
god damned he'd finally smashed going through his head and words
going damned and smashed he'd head his god words through finally
and finally words damned his god head he'd smashed going through
through god he'd smashed his head and finally damned going words
words he'd finally damned smashed god and going through his head
damned through words he'd finally smashed his god head and going
he'd finally damned god and smashed words going through his head

Blood Meridian – Cormac McCarthy

Incubate

Ragged snow –
the stars that
fall

in the dark,
dark turned truth,
now lost as

black. The Dipper snow
from darker heavens,
rags of blackness

on the world
to incubate
violence.

Stars and snow
are darker
in this history

to incubate
the already
and know it.

Blood Circuit

A flame from
the ashes would be
nothing,
a bluey rebus of
luminescent dead,

a trace of the
destruction of
these blackened
polyps like a
ghost of sun.

Beloved – Toni Morrison

1S2H4E

Dead but
spiteful

she

appeared
in the
gray and
snatched
up each
in the
household
to disturb.

She

crept from
the past
to leave
handprints
in her
victims.

The house
knew her.
It didn't
have a
number but

she

had one
to form
her dead.

parts of love

put parts
of love
on your face
love it
love it
hard
hard
with your
mouth
stroke it
and
hold it
and
heed it
and
love it
hard
love
your hands
love
your skin
love
your flesh
love
your lungs
love
your back
love
your heart
love
your mouth
what you
say
is
and to
nourish you
and to
kiss is
grace
grace
grace
more than
in this
place

of
love
so
put parts
of love
on your face

Independence Day – Richard Ford

Hazy Balm Day

Lie still
and shaded
on stoops,

pants legs
rolled above
for summer

again.
Far out
in the

languorous
world, here
is easeful

sea-salt
on the
breeze,

and dazed
heat in azalea-
softened

streets is
aroma through
the nostrils.

These lawns
are an
anthem,

high school
and *varsity* are
word footfalls

passing by in
hazy tunes with
a gridiron god.

It is the 4th
and my balm-
memories too.

Metaphors

We drive ourselves to
different metaphors with
other metaphors –

we don't know why and
are loony when wrong with our
metaphors amiss.

Infinite Jest – David Foster Wallace

[m]

Belongs to whom?
Belongs to who?

I do not know,
neutral,
congruent to the
consciously *not know*
shape of affairs.

I believe
pleasant expression
can be consciously
neutral,

surrounded by sounds of
a polished attempt,
coached by
neutrality:

belongs to who[m]ever
it belongs –

there.

Guide

Emptiness
is a guide to
inclusion,

a guide
to the
Unalone.

There is no
transcendent
cool,

no spiritual
excluded

loneliness

like the
Romantic
glorification

of ennui.
The emptiness
is not

Alone.
We wear a
peer-mask.

In the
weary world
we are

included, an
anhedonia
of the self

is not
for us Alone.
The irony

is this
spiritual
inclusion.

American Pastoral – Philip Roth

Flawlessly Americanized

The undereducated
and overburdened
neighbourhood
American

flawless in the
traditional source
of his veneration:
say a sports team.

He could be a Prince
[immigrant] or a
President [business
prowess], anything

blonde and largely
removed from the
academic. America –
all their hopes on

achievement when
insentient but made.
This is the fantasy
of possessed fans.

Wrong?

The wrong
that is living

is living
wrong,
alive:

sans
right and
sans
the right toes and
sans

along for the right ride and
sans
dazzling in the right illusion and

then
we're wrong,
alive.

The wrong
that is living

is this –
is it
wrong?

Underworld – Don DeLillo

American

This vast
shaking of the
soul,

American,

large scale
a history
assembling reveries
assembling desperation –

there's an
American shine

of thoughts
of your voice
of my voice,

a revolution
a yearning,

a migration of
voices,

American.

And there is
the game,

scoreboards
assembling the souls,

and hopeful –

they speak in
our voice,

American.

Do not blame
them all,

these found
American
voices.

Word on the Voice

And the
chipped rim
of the
deskwood
is alive in
the writing

and light,
tone of the grain
seen and heard
and a
tenor of things
written.

Words dense
in found
measurement
are content
in the voice
you and I
hear,

an agreement of
binding touch
in this
reconciliation.

I have chipped
at the meanings
random and raw and extending,
a treaty of touch
on others'
words.

It is the tone
of the tissued grain
from the

simplest surface
as you see
a wick of light
reflected,

as you
imagine the word
on the voice