

TED GREENWALD
from
COMMON SENSE

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GOES ON

The beat
Comes out the speaker
Bodies start to move
Yearning to be
Next to leaning
On some other body
They get up to dance
Couples a common
Denominator although
A few threes and fours
Can be seen
Around the floor
Spines showing through
Clothes take on
Unearthly glow
As if all things
Unthought of when
In the course of events
Have surfaced
Having a good time
Between songs
Everyone stands around
Breathing saying
To each other
What fun
Is the next one fast or slow
Can I have this dance
Who wants to know

THE PEARS ARE THE PEARS

the pears are the pears
the table is the table
the house is the house
the windows are the windows

the car is the car
the roads are the roads
the streets are the streets
the white line is the white line

the curves are the curves
the thigh is the thigh
the knee is the knee
the arms are the arms

the eyes are the eyes
the mouth is the mouth

STRAIGHT ON BEARING LEFT

skies skid into Baghdad
out of my mind copied, pieced
together, studied and translated
they get their oil from a 'well'
as likable as chinese writing systems
I grasp and share, like a popping beacon
the complete experience of the sky's members
whose i.d. cards are clouds
(see conditions inside) and how they bend

A lulls B into seeing D
R loves S but hates you
Z snores as Y marks the spot with X
ledge ages dawdle, and rush,
as I pull plug out, and rug E

AIRY RUSHES PUNCH

Airy rushes punch my shirt
Through a window of sunset dirt
And send me reeling like a lure
Through the water nerves of America
Once on the other side of somewhere
I relax and become someone else
Not that I behave different
Just behave less often
The sky offers me solace and office space
And stars I keep in drawers
Wear nothing
But a little mist and halo
I will imagine myself
A sympathetic headlight
Knocking on the door of the night
To borrow a cup of sugar
From the beautiful neighbor
Who's moved in
Without even the clothes on her back
"Would it be possible
To borrow a cup of sugar"
"Sure Sit down, honey
Make yourself comfortable"
I ease into the big dipper

COMPLETE BALANCING WEATHER MEETS

Complete balancing weather meets
With the eye of complete off-balance brain
Tottering through verbs
Dew covers the shoe
With minute observations
Piling up in an organic unity life chair and sitter
Dog floats in and pipe slipper and paper
Sits partly over the instep of unshorn foot
Snores like a saw through the glories of news logs
The reader soon falls his head down in bliss
Or is it a sleep without dreams
In a city where the nose
Comes occasionally to a water-smelling patch of haze
On the face
Moving toward the river in a phrase

SEATED ON THE BACK

Seated on the back of my boat
Fanning evening into my face
My thoughts travel
Across the river
To the little town starting to light
Yesterday I was over there
Walking the streets
Saying "Hey!" to neighbors and friends
What are they doing now
Coming home from work
Kissing hello
Sitting to supper
Spending time with the old lady and kids
Watching the news
I have a hunch I'll never know
In the cabin
I've enough food for two
Some books to take my mind away
And a bed sleeping two
The moon's high enough now
To extend a toothpick of light
Across the water
For me to pick my teeth
A gurgling and humming pacifies
My lips
As I prepare for bed
Listening to fingers
Humming off the ends
Of the arms of the chair

THE BOOK I TOSS

The book I toss is Boss
It bangs against the walls
And gets me working
I watch the thin green
Recede into a reed
And think the time right
To set the Boss right
We argue
Cops suddenly appear
I throw them and Boss
Out the window
And unscrew my ankles
I be my own boss
I be my own police

LAST FIVE MINUTES

The long and the short
Of it is
I have to keep pushing
I feel myself
Pushing against the
Lead-in to beauty
And take a hunch through
With me
Into the halls
Where the everyday
Seems like eternity
There's no fooling around
About something
As serious
As it is beautiful
There's no match
For the feeling
That gets there
When I get there
And absolutely no sense
Of duration
And no telling
How everything turns out

WHIFF

An evening
Spent talking
Spent thinking
About what my life would be
If I'd stayed
With a particular girl or woman
I went with
What would be
If I'd've been accepted to and gone
Where I applied
To a different school
Then the one I did
Where I'd learned
Different social graces
Then the ones I have
Where some of the material
Values of the American dream
Had rubbed off
Enough to make me
Live it out
In the good-works sense
If I'd settled down
And settled
For the foundation
On a house
For future generations
Instead of assuming
Immediately past generations
My foundation to mine
If I'd been
A little quicker to learn
What was expected of me
And wanting to please pleased
Going on that way

Through all eternity
I've probably been saved
From mere routines
By a streak of stubbornness
By a slow mind
And tendency to drift
By an emotional development
That requires
My personal understanding
Before happening
Feeling out the implications
An emotion has in
Form of expectation
Before trying out and
After awareness
I sense a willingness
To tell someone
I know and like
And sense the same from
Anything they'd like to know
About me
And, at the same time, have
A vast sense of privacy
Which means
There's no way
I'll wear out my personality
And its sense of continuity
Although sometimes
I feel empty
But talking to
Someone I like
And trust
And sense the same from
I feel way up
And after a long evening
Of talk about this and that
Feel wide awake

And feel the world
Wide and awake around me
And have a visual intensity
In memory
That, in near memory, dulls
And throbs
And grows vivid as hell
When I bring it to mind
Some time from then
What my life
Would've been like
Under different circumstances
Would've been different
With its own
Attendant ifs
And its own what-might've-been
But this way
I've elected to follow
And cast my vote
Each waking day in
I avoid
The possibility
Of taking the past too seriously
Or feeling any bitterness
Or sadness
This way
When my ship comes in
I'll've passed out of mind
Beyond the sight of land
And won't hesitate
For a second
To look back on all this
With fondness or remiss
The air'll be clear
The moon'll be there
And you, whoever
You are and hope to be,
Will be here with my love

ONE FOOT

one foot in the other world
the other foot in the other world