

Corner gang

I - *RAVENS*

Everyone knows
 about the ravens
they are there
 in the morning
above the wires
in their moods
 and resilience
as if the day was theirs
 the spots of sun
 and dirty grime
 the news..

Isn't it strange
 how language
is not our own anymore
the curtain
having washed away our sight
like clouds

That man over there
 for example ,
he strikes his match
and lights it to his pipe
days go by
 like dead things
 the ravens watch....

People now
are marching
into the café'
 one step foreword
two steps back
wouldn't it be right
if it were night
The darkness invades the soul.

It is everywhere
in the yellow bricks
and behind the parking lot
What if it were real.
The raven flies away
the sky
is abstract
in an array
of things
nailed up and down the fence //
a bunch of people
a house there
ideas
feelings

“...the poor used to be tough
there was a sense of drama..”

Leaves
are still
falling from the trees
as they always are

people enter a car
they drive away
going to Alaska
maybe

“do you think
his friends will still
be there
when he is gone?”

“It’s doubtful”

“...who do you mean?”

One of the ravens
flies off

“ Oh yeah, lots of fun....take in the laundry
shop for the kids..”

“Isn’t there a hospital
at the end of the block?”

“....no, they closed the library
now it’s a thrift store....”

The languid afternoon
pours itself out
like oil.....

“....that man coming
is round shouldered
and loafing along
like Quasimodo....”

“....watch the smoke over yonder
it has come
to scoop us up
like a funnel....”

II - EVENING

From the West
the wind
begins to increase
along the tops
of the thistles and weeds
there
in the vacant lot
of broken bottles and stones

a low horizon
of black clouds
hovers over the world
there is

a shuddering loneliness
to it all
you can tell
why the ravens are leaving
they begin to feel
uncomfortable here
they are not
creatures of the night

a spotlight opens
before the store
the pavement there
is scattered
with bottle caps
mashed into
the black tar
it is a mosaic
that looks best
in the spotlight
of the night
it widens
to include the store
we stand before

We are the Corner Gang
we huddle for warmth
to smoke and drink
and talk with a shuffling gait
the moon
slides behind us
admonishing us
to go out and create
it is our fate

“is that Hinchie
over there ?”
someone wants to know
and we all cross over

Someone waits for a car

and the shadows of us
curve
with the movement
of the headlights

“No! Listen to me Hynchie
She was a great photographer
You don’t know shit

Hynchie
is slow to take
the toothpick
out of his mouth
“Robert Frank.”
He says. Emphatic.

“No! No! You haven’t
seen her stuff. Vivian Maier. Little known.”

We all return to
the corner
it’s like a school of fish

Doyle says:
“Maybe I should
go off somewhere
and become a farmer.
I like working in the soil.”
Someone says:
“Yeah, Doyle. That would be
good for you.
Goodbye. When do you leave?”

Hynchie is laughing.

The night goes on like this
like music
but not just background music
inter-woven
as it were

like a theme

It starts to rain a little
and everyone acts
like it's a gale
we're goanna melt
get out of the rain fast
"I wish I had brought
my umbrella" Doyle says
Hynch says:
"Fuck you're umbrella"
and we all go in
except Doyle
who just stands there
with his mouth open
to the rain

III - IRON CACTUS

Morning again
the people
going in and out
of the café
have gotten out of step
you can see
the imbalance
right off
That Mexican lady
with the wide hips
for example
see that ??
the sunlight
on the pavement
is an iridescent sparkle
It goes down to the depths
of the sand
it is distracting

Well
are the ravens Mexican
then
Is that to be considered ?

Beside the telephone pole
there is a cactus
with sharp
rectangular spikes
like they are
made of iron
Between the spikes
there is a red flower

“it seems strange
don’t you think Hynchie ?
like they could be plastic
those flowers”

“They are” Hynchie says.

There he comes again
the round shouldered guy

“He’s gonna drag that
suitcase to hell,
Hynchie
you know that don’t you”

time
like a snake
like a grave stone

the cattle
browse the water
in
the draw
magpies
glide across the sky
time goes by

IV - EVENING AGAIN

There are
 early stars
 like diamonds
Were her eyes like that
I cannot remember
what have I learned

Nobody
 has seen her around
 lately

I drink my coffee
 and look off

 a raven dances
 across
 the top wire
 on one
 foot

V - THE CAFÉ AGAIN

and here we are
Doyle's girl friend
 sits alone
 in a corner
she is dressed in green
and likes the night

Across the street
 from the corner
if I didn't tell you
is an antique shop
with all kinds of

odd junk
to tempt
the unwary buyer

A bank on the corner
adjacent
savings and loan

that's about it

The world is turning
it forbids us
yet opens its doors
at the same time

Probably
we are the killers
who seek
to destroy
everything
until we have learned

is there
a way out of this
I wonder
to think of the prison
and then the world
to be just
a school room
to read and write in
about delusion
and who knows best
"It's gone
man
we blew it."
Hynchie says.
but he's a cynical bastard
so I don't listen

but then

no one listens
on this purgatory spire
ask that raven
on the wire

The End