

met a man on the street

who said, "you've kept me going for two years, it's really amazing to meet you."

"thank you," I answered, "but who's going to keep me going?"

I've asked this question before and all ! ever get back is a gentle smile.

but it's a good question.

they have no idea that I consider suicide several times a week.

they've read some of my books and that's enough for them.

but I only write that crap, I can't read it.

bent

near the belly of the sun,
undone by the lambs,
the red bottle's babble,
tight shoes,
right turns,
the gibbeting ladies,
the macho farts,
the rusty bells,
all the alarms,
all the hospitals,
the jails,
I've gone mad here
measuring the death of
time, now
as white light runs past
like a dog,
where did it go?
where did it all go?

one more drink, Pedro,
one more
and we'll get the hell
out of
here.

now

I sit here on a 2nd floor
hunched in yellow
pajamas
still pretending to be
a writer.
some damned gall,
at 70,
my brain cells eaten
away by the
booze.
rows of books
behind me,
I scratch my thinning
hair
and search for the
word .

for decades now
I have infuriated the
ladies,
the critics,
the university
suck-toads.

they will all soon have
their time to
celebrate.

“terribly overrated ...”

“gross...”

“an aberration...”

my hands sink into the
keyboard
of my
Macintosh
it's the same old
game,
the same old crap
and con
that scraped me
off the streets and
park benches,
the same simple
line
I learned in those
cheap rooms,
I can't let
go,
sitting here
on this 2nd floor
hunched in yellow
pajamas
still pretending to be
a writer.

the gods smile down,
the gods smile down,
the gods smile down.

the World War One Movies

were best, I mean those aviators drank at the bar every night, fighting over the one or two blondes, and it was all worth it because in the dawn they might die going after those Fokkers with their Spads, I mean, they just lined up along that bar and slugged them down.

us kids loved those movies, those men weren't like our fathers, those men laughed and fought and had these slinky blondes in long tight dresses.

each dawn was hell, up they'd go in their Spads, pulling on their goggles, giving a wave, and that long white scarf flowing out behind them, they grinned and went off into the blue.

and here came the Germans high above the clouds. they'd spot the Spads, the leader would give the signal and they'd dive downward in a roar, coming through the clouds, their machineguns sputtering loudly and the Spads would see them but not before one of the guys would get hit and roar down in flames— the guy with the sense of humor, the guy who had made everybody laugh at the bar— there he'd go, his hands rising above the flames, then oil across his goggles, he'd wiggle trying to free himself to parachute out but it was always too late— you'd see the Spad crash into a hill exploding into a huge mass of flame.

the dogfight was a real spectacle, like the hero would get a guy on his tail and have to pull an Immelman to get him off.

then he'd be on the other guy's tail and the spurt of bullets would rip through the German, his mouth would open to a spurt of blood and his plane would head toward the earth in a WHINING roar.

the dogfights were exciting and lasted a long time but the Germans always lost and one or two of their remaining planes would limp off and that would be it.

then the Spads would begin their journey back to the airfield. this was always very dramatic because one or two of them would be very crippled, just being nursed back, often the pilot hit by 3 or 4 bullets but determined to bring the plane back in and land it safely.

the ground crew would always be waiting and they would count the Spads as they came back in: one, two... 6, 7, 8... but there had been ten...

the ground crew would always be badly shaken.

the crippled planes would come in first, followed by the others.

it was a very sad time.

but that night the remaining pilots would be back at the bar with the slinky blondes,

even the aviators who had been shot were there.

they had their arms in slings, their heads bandaged but they were drinking and making the slinky blondes laugh.

outside the movie theaters they actually had parts of a Spad, a huge wing, a propeller, and at night there was a big searchlight probing the skies, you could see it for miles.

all of us boys loved those World War One movies

and we built our own balsa wood model airplanes, Spads and Fokkers.

most kits cost 25 cents which was a lot of money in the 1930's but somehow almost every kid had his own plane.

we were in a hurry to grow up.

we all wanted to be fighter pilots, we wanted those slinky blondes, we wanted to lean against that bar and gulp down a straight whiskey like nothing had happened.

we had dogfights with our model planes and they

sometimes developed into
fist fights.

we fought until we were
bloody and
torn.

we fought for our
honor.

our fathers watched us
and
yawned.

the secret

don't worry, nobody has the
beautiful lady, not really, and
nobody has the strange and
hidden power, nobody is
exceptional or wonderful or
magic, they only seem to be.
it's all a trick, an in, a con,
don't buy it, don't believe it.
the world is packed with
billions of people whose lives
and deaths are useless and
when one of these jumps up
and the light of history shines
upon them, forget it, it's not
what it seems, it's just
another act to fool the fools
again .

there are no strong men, there
are no beautiful women.
at least, you can die knowing
this
and you will have
the only possible
victory.