A Poet Lives in Indiana

by Jay Lesandrini

KNOWLEDGE
My bookshelves are empty.
For, within my fresh grave I have read everything.

MEMORY LAPSE
I opened a book today and read twenty-six pages. I don't remember the title, or even what it was I read. I don't remember anything about it. I do remember listening to Bob Dylan ("Positively 4th Street"). I must have been high.

EMOTIONAL NEWSPAPER
The newspaper cries every morning as it rests on my doorstep from 6:30 a.m. until I wade out of bed to get it. It cries harder as I read of an earthquake in Mexico, and a rape in Indianapolis. It laughs as Funky Winkerbean slides through life, never growing old; and it cheers for the Yankees (only 4½ games out) in their quest for another pennant. I comfort its anxieties by reading its life, and soon it dies: lost in the memory of the 12 o'clock news.

INTELLIGENT ERASERS
Imagine all of the knowledge that is learned by a chalkboard. And then is taught to its erasers.

ANDY GRIFFITH VERSUS MA BELL
The telephone rings quietly as I lay stoned, watching reruns of Andy Griffith and eating potato chips. Barney and Otis, the drunk, have just had a run-in, and Otis went home. Andy's talking on the phone, and Opey's at school. Lord knows what Aunt Bee is up to. Floyd hasn't been on all week, and I'm anxious to see the rest of the show. They'll call back if it's important.

THE SCOPES MONKEY TRIAL REVISITED
Still stoned (a half-hour later) watching Barney Miller, the phone rings again—loudly. I look at it as it rings, and debate as fiercely as Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan once did. I answer the phone. It's Marcia; she wants to come over to talk. I want to drink a few more beers—alone. An argument ensues, and I win. Now I know how Bryan felt after the trial.
FRESCO POETRY

In words
too dramatic for television,
a poet redeems himself in a lost art.
Just like a fresco
his black words mesh with white paper
to form a masterpiece that even
Da Vinci might smile at.

But then,
Da Vinci's frescoes
aren't worth a damn.

LIVING ROOM BLUES

Cheap art surrounds my interior like a hated animal not ready to be turned
do...
AND PARKED GENTLY, THE AUTO OF MY THOUGHTS

Halfway between tomorrow and last week I dreamed of next Easter. Rising above myself, I looked down only to feel my own heart beat, and realize the creation I am. Waking today, I write with vivid realization that never again will I dream such a dream. Tomorrow is another re-statement of the weeks of sorrow that have paved the driveway of my soul; and parked gently, the auto of my thoughts.

TOMORROW I WILL WAKE UP AND GO TO WORK; AGAIN.

Inside tomorrow there are many new days that shall forever be awaited, new dreams that will not quite be fulfilled, and old lovers whose boredom is overshadowed by great love making. I want to die in the arms of the Virgin Mary, so that someday maybe someone will make a statue of me. But, tomorrow I will wake up and go to work; again.

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A Poet Lives in Indiana

A poet lives in Indiana, where he was born, where he grew up, and where he will remain. He writes not only of Indiana, but of nowhere, and of no time, and of no thing which is not found anywhere, at any time, with anyone. A poet lives in Indiana, dreams in Indiana, and thinks in Indiana; but writes in a universe of expanding ideas within his own pen, within his own mind, within himself, within Indiana.