

# All Else Stopped

*by* Carl Santoro

it seemed odd  
from even the  
first few seconds.  
    we were discussing  
    Guru Maharaji,  
    vegetarianism, and  
    more while in a car  
    waiting for the “light”  
    to change.....  
    ...and somehow, we just  
    stopped talking  
    and  
looked to our right.  
    there on the sidewalk,  
in front of a Mr. Donut,  
on Hempstead Turnpike  
we saw  
    a man.  
    squatting down and  
    inspecting  
    the carcass  
    of a  
    long-dead bird.  
he reached down and  
touched it's tail.  
    then I noticed he was  
wearing glasses,  
had pen and paper in  
his shirt pocket;  
neatly dressed, and  
probably on his

lunch hour also.  
    he stared at  
    the body for awhile,  
    and then  
    he picked up a  
    handful of nearby  
gravel, and proceeded  
    to cover  
    his discovery.  
he maintained a serious  
thought-filled face  
with almost a  
predetermined direct fulness  
with each move.  
    all else stopped  
    for this magnificent  
    streetside ritual.  
we looked at each other  
with smiles on our faces  
as the "light" changed  
and we were swept away....  
    the Birdman of Mr.Donut  
    got up and walked off.  
    on the sidewalk  
lay his friend, the bird,  
disguised as a  
mound of gravel.  
    it's strange how things  
    were timed  
    for us  
    to arrive at  
        his ceremony.

