

Acknowledgements

by Jerry Ratch

I have outlived Ernest Hemingway
and Kurt Cobain,
two of my heroes.
I never tried sleeping my way
to the top of the literary heap.
I've won no prizes.
My work goes unrecognized, and
more often than not
unpublished.
Am I sure I have even lived?

I tried to just keep writing,
but to what end?
Who am I? What am I?
Am I delusional?
Who really knows?
I tried teaching once
but was not very good at it.
Who is, really,
when it comes to writing?

Kurt and Ernie and put a gun in their mouths
and shot out the light.
With Bukowski, it was a bottle.
I've already tried that.
No good at that either.

I sit in a café
and watch the near palms of summer
swaying against the far ridge of hills
and young girls walking along
in their sleeveless summer dresses.

Their shoulders speaking their
long history of sex
and future children,
old age and death.
Nothing stirs inside
except the old longings
that go unanswered.

Some great sponge in the sky
will soak up my lifeblood and soul.

Do you intend to keep on writing
to the bitter end?
Who knows? Any day
it could end.
Then the great silence
that ensues.

