

aren't we having fun?

by Jerry Ratch

I had a dream and in it a small deer came to the side of the road and licked the salt from my wounds. I was lying beside you in a ditch, after crawling out of a smashed car. We were just kids, really, not much more, but real love and lust and all our body parts lay scattered around us. I saw a body that looked like mine. Somebody put a head on the body, and an arm and a leg, and stuck it all back together again. Then it sat up and said, *"Hello."* Happy to be alive. Happy to be in love with you, after driving the long road home from Virginity.

Look, I just want you to face the toys of our youth, that's all, before someone has killed someone real. I want you to look close. See the scars, the burns, the terror?

I remember I was eating in this restaurant with another boyfriend. He was talking while I was wolfing down a hamburger, and he couldn't see that I was not listening. And still he kept talking. Well, I smiled. I didn't hear a word he said, you understand, but I smiled. Honestly, I'd hate to be human here. Still, I don't think I can sleep.

And I remember him saying, *"Aren't we having fun?"* And me saying, *"Yes, we are."*

