

Philip Guston, Painting, Smoking, Eating

by Jerry Ratch

As far as I can tell, all he eats is wedges of cake
from the plate on top of his blanket as he
lies there in bed, smoking cigarettes and
staring up at the painting of a pile of shoes.

Or else this is a real pile of shoes
building up beside the bed, and he lies there
applying paint to them from the pots of paint
that are there in bed with him.

While a shade pull and a bare light bulb
with a gold pull chain hang down,
and a cloud of white smoke or white paint
obscures the top of the shoe pile.

