

drinking buddies

by M. F. Sullivan

Tonight, Bukowski and I drink together.

He tells me about the time
nobody believed he was Ginsberg
and he got his ass pounded into the pavement by a fat man.

The whole time I think My Christ, what a life.
Beautiful in ragged simplicity, his formula to existence:

drinking
working
struggling
fighting
and always writing
that froth of words that poured from him
fast with the typewriter
but faster with the computer
and always there no matter what

and there they'd be, beautiful.

But then Bukowski looks up from his story to say
it's in you, baby
right in your soul.
Everybody's gotta start somewhere
sometimes it's slow
sometimes you get your shit wrecked
tossed out on the street
depressed
exhausted
drunk
fired

lonely
old in your heart
but as long as you're going, that's what matters.

You can do it, baby, he says.
Just let it happen, and it will.
It always does.

Bukowski sips his beer
belches
then carries on about the time when his landlady
brought him a phonograph to mute his mind
like he'd never said anything at all.

