

Daniel Fogg

In a Restaurant That Recently Changed Back Into a Diner

My face
reflects yours. You
lean over a pink formica table
and kiss me.
Chrome everywhere
reflects neon elvises (wearing blue shoes) and
cardboard marylins (standing over the air
vent), and jimmydean as well in his
red jacket.
It reflects us, too (along with a little grease)
above the turquoise lunch counter.

I remember the picture from your underwear
drawer: You with a bee-hive, wearing
the New Look, holding my brother in a blanket
(blue for BOY), behind you, a three-bedroom
house, beside you, a man and the New Frontier
on the horizon.

The bleached waitress (named Stella) interrupts
your grandchild anecdote with
the daily special. There is the
ever-present threat
of MSG.

I came along in the 60's, late
in your child-bearing years.
People were wearing their hair longer then.
And the war made its way over the ocean and
into the three-bedroom house that my brother
ran away from--dodging draft, and that my father
walked out on, leaving you with a mortgage
and a son.

The loud stereophonic jukebox (also chrome) plays
something bluesy as
we chew half-wilted salads and sip
cherry phosphates.

Once, in the late 70's, I turned
on the t.v. and was told I was
a "Latch-key Child." Puberty hit
me while you waited in a gas-line.

Now, seated in a booth made of that same red
sparkley stuff as the seat of my first bike,
you ask me unimportant questions.
I shade lies in between bits of
lighter conversation.
The word (not the color) blue
reflects itself somewhere among all the flashing
pastels of the diner. You slip me a twenty
under the table and
reach for the check.

untitled

A bird came down
in front of my mother's house
as she swept her stairs
the other day. She
shooed it away with a hard
look and the head of her broom.
As she's sweeping her walk, the
dust makes a cloud around
her; and she thinks wasn't this
somehow easier a dozen years
ago. She straightens her back
when she reaches the curb, and
groans. Her mended apron is covered
with gray flowers that have faded
to blotches. Age spots.

She stands there on the sidewalk
for a moment. She gawks at cars.
They widened the street one year. She
grew short the next--no longer fitting
into the neighborhood. Her flat shoes
are firmly planted, and she looks up
into the wires to where the
bird waits.

Facts about Goats

They're always late.
They can't cut hair.
They are frequently caught borrowing things
you'll never see again.
They take too many showers.
They have bad breath after drinking too much.
They drink too much.
And never (NEVER) expect them to
know how you're feeling or
where the bank is.

They are the "other" animals at the zoo,
The cheetah food,
The ones you have to see 10 of
before you get to the Lions.
With names that are completely
Unpronounceable,
and that just sort of
stand there.

They don't keep their apartments clean,
Can't wash dishes,
Apologize,
or open the right end of a milk carton.

They're cute little white things
with four legs, horns and beards
that can eat a tin can, climb rocks,
and are frequently

associated with
Satan.

They mean no harm.
They're just always out of something.
And are far too suspicious to ever be romantic.
But they love you
(sort of)
And you love them (sort of)

They're really not that interesting
(once you know them)
And what bugs you the most is
There's absolutely nothing
(nothing)
no thing
about them that is
in the least
ideal.