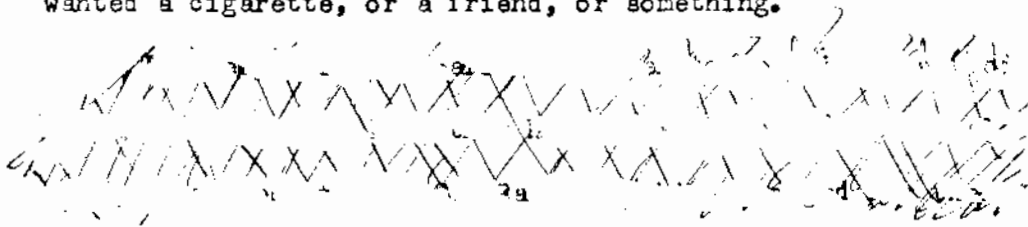


"WANDERING"

Hollywood
1981

I'm at The Academy Of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences watching Tex Avery cartoons, which are inventive and occasionally funny, but after five in a row are growing increasingly ~~more~~ tedious.

I went into the lobby and lit up a cigarette and was immediately made to put it out. You can't even smoke in the damn lobby. As I strolled around I felt incredible waves of alienation from all the other people who looked like they wanted a cigarette, or a friend, or something.



It rained all night and drizzled all day. Standing outside Tiny Naylor's on Sunset and La Brea I asked ~~two~~ old Hungarian ladies which bus would take me to Wilshire and La Brea. "Eighty-nine," they both replied several times. Eighty-nine arrived, we all boarded and it immediately turned right on Sunset going in the wrong direction. I turned to the Hungarian ladies and said "we're going in the wrong direction." The one nearest to me smiled and said "eighty-nine" and nodded knowingly.

It's certainly eighty degrees or more as I sit here on the hill at Hancock park. It's clear, the wind is blowing and, assuredly one of the most beautiful days I have ~~ever~~ seen

in L. A. in a long time.

A fellow with a pregnant girl came up from behind me and asked if I liked Willa Cather (I'm reading "My Mortal Enemy"). I was momentarily shocked by being spoken to and gagged on my cigarette, then had nothing substantial to reply since I ~~had~~ just began the book an hour ~~before~~ ago.

Some little kids are playing soccer and a very little black boy tried to join in and was sent away (several of the others are black, too) and he walked up the hill saying, "Mommy, the kids won't let me play." For a brief moment I thought I might cry, even though the little boy didn't seem to care quite that much. He's drinking a can of pop now and appears happy and I still want to cry.

Kites are flying, balls are being tossed, kids go skateboarding by, babies are crying, people sit conversing and a football game is in progress. I don't feel like I'm part of all this fun.

As I sat here on the hill reading an extremely gaunt black woman wearing burgundy house slippers ~~approached~~ ^{Came Wandering} up the hill. It soon became apparent that she was walking right up to me.

"What are you doing?" She asked accusingly, staring down at me with her hands on her hips.

"Reading," I said.

She looked as though she'd caught me doing something very nasty and hated me for it. "I know what you're reading, throw it away!"

I put the place mark in and set the book beside me. She continued staring down at me until I looked away, then began turning in circles. After four or five times around she continued up the hill. She's still up there.

...She seems to have gone. Before she began turning in circles, her slipper came off right by my knee. Her big stockinged foot groped for it, but didn't touch me. My first impression upon her arrival in front of me was that she would hit me. She didn't. ~~Nothing else happened.~~

Now I'm sitting at Farmer's Market drinking lemonade amidst a huge mass of people. The bright sunshine was becoming oppressive in the park.

Some old ladies with smeared make-up were looking all around for a table to sit at, stopped beside mine, ^{and} decided amongst themselves that I should go somewhere else so they could sit here. I gave them the nastiest look I could conjure up on such short notice and they left in a huff.

Now a smelly, one-legged man has seated himself with me. It's time to go.

I'm sitting on a railing behind the laundromat where nine-tenths of my clothes are spinning around having the water shaken out of them.

It's one hot mother-scratcher of a day - certainly eighty-five degrees, clear, bright, sunny and hot. I'm wearing shorts so my pale, dead-fish-white legs may actually get some color. I bought a bottle of Coke in the 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ size and am really enjoying it. ~~As the really big bottle is incredibly pleasurable.~~

I'm sweating all over, it's really hot.

As I was eating my Big Boy here at Bob's Big Boy at the counter, the fellow next to me put his hand on my book ("The Water-Method Man") and asked me if I liked John Irving. We talked for about twenty minutes, during which time he told me he was a video producer making educational films about holistic medicine and the United Nations. He wrote his name and several phone numbers on an unlined index card (with crossed sevens).

I moved into the Hollywood Bowl Motel, then walked to the Burger King next door, which is where I am.

Now I'm at the Copper Penny restaurant (on La Brea) seated directly next to two young ladies. Both of our two-person booths equal the size of one normal booth and I feel like I'm eavesdropping on their conversation. They are talking about who is going with who and about the concept of "moving out of the house, and quitting school". This is an odd

situation. If I stop writing it really seems like I'm listening, which of course I am.

Ever since I moved into the motel this afternoon I've been in a panic. I'm sure it's the apprehension of the upcoming solitude. I became very used to Sheldon's place very quickly. This is good for me, I'll have to get used to myself.

I'm really bloated on coffee.

I'm at the Copper Penny on Hudson drinking coffee and awaiting breakfast. I must have slept about eleven hours last night. It was nice. I was averaging about five good hours at Sheldon's, with another annoyed hour trying to sleep through his meetings and phone calls.

Having just eaten a big hearty stack of pancakes I feel terribly fat, although I must admit I've been feeling fat for weeks. I can't figure out why, I certainly walk enough.

I'm now at the Hollywood library sitting across from a grizzled bum with a hundred pencils and pens in his shirt pocket (along with a plastic fork), two toothpicks in his mouth and a giant stack of newspapers and magazines beside him. He is diligently putting brackets around every other

or every third paragraph in the Los Angeles Times. Every now and then he will quickly change from pencil to pen.

I just smoked my one and only joint as I listened to a classical music on a station that was coming in and going out until I had to turn it off. Why is it so totally wierd to be here?

I exercised for ten minutes to "Jungleland", took a shower, beat off and am now lying here and writing.

Right across the courtyard in room 25 or 26, some fat, equat black dude has been hollering on and off since yesterday. My assumption right now is that he is either a pusher or a pimp. I've seen a whole parade of wierdos go in and out of his room, amongst them five or six black hookers, a young black guy with a monsterous ghetto-blaster, two kids about fourteen or fifteen and several little children under the age of three (I think they're his).

He's still yelling.

He stopped.

Kids voices. (A child was crying very loud last night as though it were being beaten).

The buzzer (for a phone call) went off in the room to the right of me.

It's raining in L.A. I put my notebook in my green knapsack and hiked to Los Burritos restaurant on Hollywood Blvd.

I ate my Mexican food and read a little, but now it seems to be raining harder than when I left. There aint nothin' I can do 'bout it, date fo sho.

For the last several weeks I've done nothing but wander to restaurants, watch movies and sleep. One hell of an existence. If it keeps raining for the next several days I am going to be one wet muchacho.

Ch well.

The rain seems to have let up a little bit. I found an umbrella last night and even though it's kind of broken it kept me dry.

The couple behind me have the most comedy droning voices I've ever heard. They sound like Ma and Pa Kettle.

Man, it looks like it's going to pour.

Last night I purchased a bottle of Black and White scotch and drank most of it. I awoke with a whopper headache, took three aspirin and two vitamin C and went out to breakfast at IHOP and now I'm doing okay.

It's Friday, the weather has cleared up and I feel fine.

It's cloudy again.

The loud, garrulous, permeating voice of the squat, fat pimp/pusher woke me up this morning. Fuck that asshole!

I went into the bathroom and removed my toothbrush from the Dixie Poker Fun glass I got with my hot chocolate last night and found that it was moist. The towels were also still moist from the shower I took last night. There is no ventilation in this shit-hole.

As I was just walking home I decided to buy a bottle of scotch. I went into the Hugh's Market and scrutinized the stock. The absolute cheapest bottle of scotch they had was a half pint of Cluny at \$2.09. In the moment I was looking at the liquor a line of six people appeared behind me. I asked the clerk for the Cluny and he set it on top of my notebook.

"Must've had a bad day at school today," he said.

Everyone in line laughed, as did I. I left the store grinning, pleased with having been misread.

Using my Poker Fun Dixie cup I just ingested two aspirin. The scotch is warm.

Having procured some ice from the motel's communal kitchen I consumed the entire bottle of booze. Big deal, it was a

half pint. Soon thereafter I went back to the market and purchased a package of ham, some mayonaise (I already had bread) and a Penthouse magazine. I made two sandwiches, ate them and wrote this.

I went to the bookstore on Hollywood Blvd. and began perusing their used books in the back. Everytime I crouched down to the lower shelves I would force an incredibly stinky fart out. Finally, having only seen possibly a third of the books, I left in dire need of defecating. Once outside I quickly realized there was no available facility.

Heading up the boulevard I stopped in a head shop and looked at the pipes. On the bottom shelf was every individual piece needed to construct a pipe. Doing the math in my head (while crouching and farting) I realized I could buy the pieces cheaper than put together. A loophole in the system. For \$2.50 I now have a \$3.00 pipe.

I finally went to the Copper Penny on Hudson and shat in their restroom.

~~Copper Penny~~

~~Sorry I can't be an in touch, but I don't have a telephone. That's not the real reason, actually I haven't contacted anyone. I'm waiting for something, something happens. It's not...~~

In lieu of going to a park (which I looked for but could not find), I have ended up on a fire escape at Hollywood High School. It's a huge stairway running three flights up. At the top is a large area where two sets of double doors open out. Bums must come here to roost because there are all kinds of empty booze bottles. Then again, it could be the kids.

A black hooker with a purple dress just walked beneath me. Her dress was cut diagonally from the waist so it just barely covered her enormous breasts and one shoulder. It looked like something one of the beautiful alien women would wear on "STAR TREK."

I bought a \$9.00 bag of pot the day before yesterday and it's pretty good. Admittedly there was only four joints worth, but I'm making it last by smoking only little bits with my new pipe.

I was awakened in the middle of the night because my left foot hurt. It still hurts. A lot. I have no idea what the cause is. I do not like things going wrong with me I can't see.

From my usual perch here at the IHOP I can see pedestrians crossing Sunset Blvd. and kids sitting on the lawn of Hollywood High. The F-stop rises and falls as the sun slides in and out behind the clouds, or the clouds move before the sun -

whatever.

My foot stopped hurting.

Rick and I met at the IHOP and had dinner. It was already about 9:30 P.M., yet neither of us had eaten. As I sat down at the table I happily told him that on the walk over I had finally sung "Thunder Road" all the way through with no mistakes. Rick smiled, obviously impressed.

He had a BLT, I a cheese omelette (which I also had for breakfast there). Rick and I talked: "IKIRU" was tomorrow at 5:30 at UCLA, "SLAUGHTER-HOUSE FIVE" was tonight so we missed it, the World Theater has new seats and is up to \$2.25 for a triple-feature, Frank Borzage is pronounced zah-gee, the Director's Guild awards came out but neither of us knew the winner (though we both suspected and dreaded it being Robert Redford), we got a second pot of coffee, he said "Call Of The Wild" was great, I asked to borrow it, he's reading only short books now, in a few pages I'll have finished "Mrathon Man" which makes every William Goldman book, he's seen every Academy Award nominee this year (unprecedented), we finished our second pot of coffee and decided to get stoned.

Behind the Castagne Realtor next to the IHOP, Rick filled his new soapstone pipe with his pot and we smoked. I refilled it with my pot and we smoked some more. The combination with

all of the coffee was great.

We crossed Sunset and sat down in front of Hollywood High. I mentioned again about having sung all of "Thunder Road" (we were both wearing Bruce Springsteen buttons) and he said "Do it."

I began pretty shaky, unused to singing and having someone listen. I began warming up a little, then got into it and as the song built I began belting. A fat guy on the other side of Sunset quickly headed over loudly singing another song. He came right up to us singing loud enough to drown me out (so I stopped). His voice was dreadful. Possibly sensing that he was quickly going to lose his audience he cut himself off.

"And now I'd like to sing my theme song, that favorite by Paul Simon we all know and love." He quickly went into "Still Crazy After All These Years."

Just then a black guy with a bunched up shirt in his hand came striding up singing another song and drown out the fat guy.

"Your voice cracks!" Hollered Fatso at the black dude cutting him off.

The black guy offered to sell us the shirt in his hand for fifty cents. "I just gotta get downtown."

"It's a good, brisk walk," said Rick, "I've done it

a lot of times."

We all sat awkwardly for a moment until Rick said he had to get to sleep because he had to get up for work. He and I headed back to the IHOP to get his bicycle and fat-ass joined us.

"It's good we got rid of the nigger," said fatty confidentially.

Rick and I spread out and slowed down letting him pass. He shook his head as though we were so fucked up we were beyond his comprehension and walked on.

We passed five black hookers on the corner and stopped at the locked up bicycle. He reminded me about "IKIRU", I said I'd call him at work.

"Have a good one," said Rick, and we parted.

As I passed Hollywood High I picked up where I had left off in "Thunder Road" and sang it the rest of the way through without a mistake.

There are so many different sounds here at the motel: a doorknock, a child's cry, the squat black guy yelling, a kid really crying and abruptly stopping, a long tire screech, an airplane, a fast car, more cars, something knocking somewhere, another car, muffled talking, another knock, a motorcycle, muffled talking, child's voice "Daddy...", a child's laughter, squat black man yelling, a door closing, a woman yelling back, discussion, a metallic twang, springs

squeeking, etc., etc., etc.

I'm at the library and there is a young lady looking at a magazine across the table from me and we're playing eye contact games. She seems incredibly serious about this magazine. As I wrote that last sentence she disappeared. She's behind me now, seated behind a barrier of books.

It's pouring, the squat black dude has been hollering for hours and the folks in room nine sound like they're trying to batter down the walls with a tree.

My stomach is gurgling profusely.

I'm at Cantor's Deli with Sheldon (who just went to the can) and we are seated directly next to Milton Berle. If I stick my right arm straight out I'd be touching him, not that I want to.

What a nothing, itchy, antsy day. I wandered up Hollywood Blvd. ostensibly looking for something to eat, but really just moving aimlessly. In front of the Pacific Theater was a group of about fifteen women protesting the movie "MANIAC". About fifty people were watching them carry their signs and march in a circle chanting "stop 'MANIAC'!"

I didn't really intend to cause any commotion, but as one of the women came past me I asked if she'd seen the film, my curiosity was aroused and I just wanted to know what was so objectionable about the film, but she said she hadn't seen it. I asked another sign-carrying protester and she hadn't seen it either, so I asked yet another and she also hadn't seen it. When the second woman said no the watchers laughed a little. When the third one said no it got the monster laugh. Many of the women turned and sneered at me. I sauntered away.

I was forced to leave The Copper Penny sooner than I intended today. Directly next to me was a Mexican woman and a boy of about twelve who was nearly bald and looked like he was either a cancer patient undergoing radiation treatments or he was an android from the planet Zoonad. He had a plate the size of a serving tray before him with enough food on it to feed an army. As he got halfway through his feast he began coughing and retching, then vomited all over the table. I hastily departed.

I'm getting confused. I can't seem to just sit and read. I'm disturbed. Now, all of a sudden, I feel like I'm shirking my responsibilities by not working.

There is a pretty girl sitting by herself behind me who is also writing. I feel like if I spoke with her my head might explode. I'm a coward. Last night at Ben Frank's an obnoxious girl behind me told me to shut up because she didn't want to hear what I was saying which wasn't even directed to her. As soon as I responded to her I got shakey. As soon as I responded to the girls protesting "MANIAC" I got shakey. What's the deal? A fag sat down across from me and immediately smiled and nodded at me. Now a big, chunky girl has seated herself with the pretty one. Now I'm outnumbered and don't have to feel compelled to speak to ~~anyone~~ anyone.

Yesterday I came back to my room and there was a guy standing in front of it. I skirted him and unlocked my door.

"You live here?" He asked.

"Uh-huh," I replied.

"Can I come in and watch "WONDER WOMAN"?"

I told him I was going out and had to get ready.

"But it's my favorite show," he pleaded.

I said "sorry," got inside and locked the door.

I fell asleep at about 8:00 P.M. and awoke at midnight just in time to catch "THE YOUNG LIONS" on T.V. Afterward I walked over to the IHCP (it being the only place open in

the vicinity) and scarfed some flapjacks. The restaurant was loaded with hookers, scumbags and other colorful people. Directly to my left was a table with two white guys and two black hookers, one of which was extremely loud and obnoxious. One of the white guys kept bopping back and forth between his table and another containing four black hookers. On about his fourth visit, he and a hooker began yelling at each other. The loud, obnoxious hooker joined him. As the yelling got louder it became apparent that the seated black hooker was actually male. The transvestite told the obnoxious hooker to fuck herself and the hooker slapped her. The transvestite replied by picking up a coffee pot and whalloping the hooker over the head with it, sending her crashing to the floor with blood pouring down her face. Her white buddy grabbed the transvestite by the neck and punched it right in the nose ^{sending it} ~~and~~ sailing over ^A ~~the~~ booth. Soon the whole table of transvestites was battling the hookers and their boy-friends. Coffee cups went flying, syrup containers whizzed past and smashed and many nasty things were hollered, the *most* quotable being the hooker yelling at the transvestite, "you can eat my pussy, bitch, 'cause at least I got one!" Finally the police arrived and took everyone out but the obnoxious, bleeding hooker who was standing on a table saying she was going to get her gun and kill the transvestite. Her white

boyfriend held her around the legs and she kept screaming for him to let her go, which he wouldn't do, so she smashed a syrup container on his head. He reeled back against the wall and the cops finally got her down by poking her with their billy clubs. The police asked me and the waiters what happened and we told them, then they left.

The restaurant is now being cleaned up around me.

As I was turning off La Brea onto Lanewood I found a purse in the middle of the street. I looked over at the Stardust Motel figuring it was some sort of plant ^{as} and ^{as} soon as I touched it someone would shoot me, but no one was watching. It was unzipped so I toed it open and the first visible thing inside was a \$5.00 bill. I snatched the five, immediately began to panic and turned into the first coffee shop I passed.

I'm at the Copper Penny defecating in their somewhat unkept restroom. Having just finished an omlette supreme I feel like I ate mine and several other people's meals.

Darryl and I ~~drank~~ ^{gulped} down a cheap bottle of tequila and passed out in the living room of the Lanewood place. I awoke at 5:00 A.M. lying on the couch with a giant pillow under my back so that I was ~~curved~~ ^{bent} like a bow and Darryl was on the floor laughing hysterically. I asked him what was

so funny, but he was fast asleep.

With my head hurting bad I ate 500 mg. of vitamin C, drank a big glass of water and went back to sleep. Three hours later I was up again, only now the headache had subsided somewhat and Darryl was snoring like an untuned chainsaw.

I stumbled out of the house and found Sunset Blvd. totally barricaded due to a twenty-six mile marathon out to the beach. I crossed over to the IHOP and am presently drinking coffee. Before me sits a dazed black man in a full-length white robe. When I burp I can taste the tequila.

The runners are just going by.

My last night at the Ho Bo Mo and I sure as hell won't miss it. Right now in room number seven Tyrone, this thin black fag, has another thin black fag in there and a black girl with tremendously large breasts and they're all partying loudly. So loudly in fact that Alvin, the squat black dude across the way, came over and told them to shut the fuck up.

~~The next day I went to the beach and saw the runners. They were all black and they were all partying. The girls were all black and they were all partying. The girls were all black and they were all partying.~~