

# H

## Adieu to Norman, Bon Jour to Joan and Jean-Paul

It is 12:10 in New York and I am wondering  
 if I will finish this in time to meet Norman for lunch  
 ah lunch! I think I am going crazy  
 what with my terrible hangover and the weekend coming up  
 at excitement-prone Kenneth Koch's  
 I wish I were staying in town and working on my poems  
 at Joan's studio for a new book by Grove Press  
 which they will probably not print  
 but it is good to be several floors up in the dead of night  
 wondering whether you are any good or not  
 and the only decision you can make is that you did it

yesterday I looked up the rue Frémicourt on a map  
 and was happy to find it like a bird  
 flying over Paris et ses environs  
 which unfortunately did not include Seine-et-Oise  
 which I don't know

as well as a number of other things  
 and Allen is back talking about god a lot  
 and Peter is back not talking very much  
 and Joe has a cold and is not coming to Kenneth's  
 although he is coming to lunch with Norman  
 I suspect he is making a distinction  
 well, who isn't

I wish I were reeling around Paris  
 instead of reeling around New York  
 I wish I weren't reeling at all  
 it is Spring the ice has melted the Ricard is being poured

we are all happy and young and toothless  
 it is the same as old age  
 the only thing to do is simply continue  
 is that simple  
 yes, it is simple because it is the only thing to do  
 can you do it  
 yes, you can because it is the only thing to do  
 blue light over the Bois de Boulogne it continues  
 the Seine continues  
 the Louvre stays open it continues it hardly closes at all  
 the Bar Américain continues to be French  
 de Gaulle continues to be Algerian as does Camus  
 Shirley Goldfarb continues to be Shirley Goldfarb  
 and Jane Hazan continues to be Jane Freilicher (I think!)  
 and Irving Sandler continues to be the balayeur des artistes  
 and so do I (sometimes I think I'm 'in love' with painting)  
 and surely the Piscine Deligny continues to have water in it  
 and the Flore continues to have tables and newspapers  
 and people under them  
 and surely we shall not continue to be unhappy  
 we shall be happy  
 but we shall continue to be ourselves everything  
 continues to be possible  
 René Char, Pierre Reverdy, Samuel Beckett it is possible isn't it  
 I love Reverdy for saying yes, though I don't believe it

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# R

## A Step Away from Them

It's my lunch hour, so I go  
 for a walk among the hum-colored  
 cabs. First, down the sidewalk  
 where laborers feed their dirty  
 glistening torsos sandwiches  
 and Coca-Cola, with yellow helmets  
 on. They protect them from falling  
 bricks, I guess. Then onto the  
 avenue where skirts are flipping  
 above heels and blow up over  
 grates. The sun is hot, but the  
 cabs stir up the air. I look  
 at bargains in wristwatches. There  
 are cats playing in sawdust.

On  
 to Times Square, where the sign  
 blows smoke over my head, and higher  
 the waterfall pours lightly. A  
 Negro stands in a doorway with a  
 toothpick, languorously agitating.  
 A blonde chorus girl clicks: he  
 smiles and rubs his chin. Everything  
 suddenly honks: it is 12:40 of  
 a Thursday.  
 Neon in daylight is a  
 great pleasure, as Edwin Denby would  
 write, as are light bulbs in daylight.

I stop for a cheeseburger at JULIET'S  
 CORNER. Giulietta Masina, wife of  
 Federico Fellini, è *bell'attrice*.  
 And chocolate malted. A lady in  
 foxes on such a day puts her poodle  
 in a cab.

There are several Puerto  
 Ricans on the avenue today, which  
 makes it beautiful and warm. First  
 Bunny died, then John Latouche,  
 then Jackson Pollock. But is the  
 earth as full as life was full, of them?  
 And one has eaten and one walks,  
 past the magazines with nudes  
 and the posters for BULLFIGHT and  
 the Manhattan Storage Warehouse,  
 which they'll soon tear down. I  
 used to think they had the Armory  
 Show there.

A glass of papaya juice  
 and back to work. My heart is in my

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# A

## Personal Poem

Now when I walk around at lunchtime  
 I have only two charms in my pocket  
 an old Roman coin Mike Kanemitsu gave me  
 and a bolt-head that broke off a packing case  
 when I was in Madrid the others never  
 brought me too much luck though they did  
 help keep me in New York against coercion  
 but now I'm happy for a time and interested

I walk through the luminous humidity  
 passing the House of Seagram with its wet  
 and its loungers and the construction to  
 the left that closed the sidewalk if  
 I ever get to be a construction worker  
 I'd like to have a silver hat please  
 and get to Moriarty's where I wait for  
 LeRoi and hear who wants to be a mover and  
 shaker the last five years my batting average  
 is .016 that's that, and LeRoi comes in  
 and tells me Miles Davis was clubbed 12  
 times last night outside birdland by a cop  
 a lady asks us for a nickel for a terrible  
 disease but we don't give her one we  
 don't like terrible diseases, then

we go eat some fish and some ale it's  
 cool but crowded we don't like Lionel Trilling  
 we decide, we like Don Allen we don't like  
 Henry James so much we like Herman Mel-  
 ville

we don't want to be in the poets' walk in  
 San Francisco even we just want to be rich  
 and walk on girders in our silver hats  
 I wonder if one person out of the 8,000,000 is  
 thinking of me as I shake hands with LeRoi  
 and buy a strap for my wristwatch and go  
 back to work happy at the thought possibly so

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# A

## Poem ["Lana Turner has collapsed!"]

Lana Turner has collapsed!  
 I was trotting along and suddenly  
 it started raining and snowing  
 and you said it was hailing  
 but hailing hits you on the head  
 hard so it was really snowing and  
 raining and I was in such a hurry  
 to meet you but the traffic  
 was acting exactly like the sky  
 and suddenly I see a headline  
 lana turner has collapsed!  
 there is no snow in Hollywood  
 there is no rain in California  
 I have been to lots of parties  
 and acted perfectly disgraceful  
 but I never actually collapsed  
 oh Lana Turner we love you get up

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