

AP

Book II
The California Papers

a poem by Steve Carey

Introduction by Edmund Berrigan

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AP is lack mountain #3

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An Idea in the Blood: Steve Carey's *AP*

AP — "Associative Prowess", as read in the opening lines — was called a young man's book in a letter from Keith Abbott¹, co-editor with Steve Carey of the ribald West Coast-based poetry magazine, "Blue Suede Shoes". "Why didn't you publish it, etc, etc", he admonished. A letter from poet Phillip Whalen² reads: "I can't remember whether I wrote to thank you for *AP*, which I got a kick out of reading. Maybe Horace was right - 'publish after the years'. But I doubt it, what's good is good; time doesn't have much to do with it. One time I wrote 'The life of a poet/less than 2/3-rds of a second'".

Carey's hybrid prose-poetry work *The California Papers*, written over 1966-67 and published by United Artists in 1981, was envisioned as the first installment of a long-term project. *AP*, composed in 1967, did not see full publication until 1984, when it was released by Archipelago Books, with a separate title page listing it as "Book II The California Papers". A third entry, *Some LA Apartments*, was probably written sometime in the late 70s or early 80s after a series of photographs by artist Ed Ruscha, and is composed entirely of captions for those photographs. The poem, never typed up by Carey, survived as a handwritten manuscript fastened together with metal screws.

An idea in the blood!

AP, in a casual talkiness directed to the reader, begins in search of an idea amidst its dailiness. There's an accumulation of voices, some drawn from television, and tones of voice to create dialogues within its monologue. The poem invites company and intimacy, and for the poet, being a young man in California weather, intimacy leads to sex,

Excesses duly tainted
the edges' every next laboration

Facts just after the supposed blackness' whirl
went less this than points

As Whalen put it³: "I like the parts in it — say every 6 pages or so— where you go absolutely crazy or totally disguised ...". Carey's attention wanders from section to section, with appearances by Ed Ruscha, to mentions of the social politics of painters Paul Sérusier and Gauguin, to a broadcast of a baseball game, to a Christmas present from director John Ford, to a note on Donald Allen, which also glimpses Carey's placement in the contemporary poetry dialogue of that time. Richard Brautigan also takes a turn, as do Allen Ginsberg, Michael McClure, and Whalen.

AP is not the kind of poem that grounds you in a fixed message or point of view. It aims for the magic space that can be entered, left, and returned to. California, specifically LA and then San Francisco, step in as a mythological location. Not an ancient myth, but rather the myth of consciousness in the present state.

Sometimes Carey finds the magic between the words, and other times in the static sense of fixed scenarios—watching TV, listening to the ballgame. Each kind of scenario is also thought of as a work, which allows for displacement into and out of the poem, affixed by his musical conduction and sense of the language.

As associative cognizance is a basic function of the mind, "associative prowess" is the art of that use.

How much of the ump is with us?

LOTS.

and it was the ump who said that.

But there are limits, and with Carey they are secretive. The outcome is the beauty of the poem, the feeling of possibility and being carried along with it. The income comes at a cost too terrible to mention, but we get glimpses:

But at least it's a new season now,
so I know there is an answer.

The simple encouragement of change.

And that's what lost
if the change is forced.

And a page later:

Very often I am ashamed
of some of the things
that encourage me

...

Don't ask me why

I will never finish this poem.

Don't ask me why.

From this point the poem descends, and details, impressions, and monologues of conversation about his move from LA to San Francisco take hold in resumption of the perpetuating present. It's like watching the language of a plane landing. I won't relay the ending to you, you'll have to travel to it.

--*Edmund Berrigan*

1 Abbot, Keith. Letter to Steve Carey. 19 Dec. 1984.

2 Whalen, Phillip. Letter to Steve Carey. 26 June 1986.

3 Whalen, Phillip. Letter to Steve Carey. 16 March 1986.

AP

for Marion Farrier

The streetlights, what can I say?
can't flap the sun back, no

All this determination is ruining my teeth

I have nothing to do with the day

Elinor thinks it's all in the day before
—my fault—the writer

which means (5:something a.m.
daylight saving time)

I am afraid of my own ideas
and sometimes Elinor
who doesn't even write
but is my softest idea
and just full of ideas of her own

Is she another determination?

What, tho, could be more determined than a suck?

Which might be why so much life
has it at its start

I'm happy about that ...
it a thought too

Reminds me of this idea
gets into the blood sometimes:
cheap, unsophisticated
a determination for the blood
singularities
and no real need for subjects either—
an idea with no place in the brain

An idea in the blood!

Determined without trying

More and more window
a day in motion
with a blue
which is not a march for a blackness
and
two rather natty park bums
walk by for the Safeway trashbins
now before opening

Could anybody stop them?

They aren't trying
they're hungry

I wish I was.

Idea's been in my blood
plenty of times
and never so much as an urge
let alone a real pang or a hardon

Quiet.

It's ten of six

(which poem is this anyway
and the man with the watery voice

(it's the poem in which
that doesn't mean he's gargling

is busy getting ready for work

We wave
(two windows)

and a rash of coffee breaks out over the city
I mean the Greater Los Angeles Area

similarly, the dawn
not down
does do

Off, two friv' and lav' bum fops
nat by for the Safeway trashbin

At ten o'six the man the watery voice gets up
determined to suck me off before work

I steal what I can care about,
get off

But it's up all up sun's up
daylight for the hours
nothing

I can't do anything now
until the mailman comes

Already it's got to be 90 in here
shit

Eat, shit, find a life
(and someone to explain it to)

where I live

Luckily there's some cactus here and there
ignoring everything
even their own space
which they explode.

And in back—
banana tree...
remaining.

Summer.

There's some others inside the room here
inside
stalks in pots
but I can't begin to spell any of them
(such a nice catalogue too)
(*Basin Greenery*)

All indoors, as I say,
and *withering*.
“It's not the temperature, you know,
it's the poison fucking air it sits here in...”
Everything goes brown,
after the air,
the shade of death with a reason,
or a life with one, —
color of a dying
swindled of titular change and season,
left—an end that
won't stop, won't clock

(not funny (well, maybe) —
what I mean attention)

And so is trust, I have just come to think, everything.

That's 200%

total.

200. Too bad the shades are down now
(105° at least)

or I could enumerate...

It's a war, as I see it,
between temperature and (and) everything else,
alias attention and trust.

Tune In Later

It's...
time to go for more
cigarettes and soda.

Should I send this,
just like this,
right the hell to Japan?

Want it?

Steve Carey 20 AP

"This tape will self-destruct in five seconds."

—Mission Impossible

Barney is only doing his job when he
hands out a parking ticket—to the gov-
ernor. Barney = Don Knotts.

The governor tears it up
and that's that. Henri Duran
a French airplane tycoon
wants to fly off to a secret business deal.

Today...

Burgess Meredith stands in
for vacationing Hugh Downs. Burgess:
Hugh. (Two hours)
Channel 4

(Note: Remember to ask someone
about 1956, also the Dave Garroway
scandal some years later.)

4.

TODAY is a marathon
should be
Life was in 1956

(Wait a minute. Let's
make something out of this now.
(*As if to a child*):
Clo-o-o-ose your eyes...)

I don't know what today is
(*Aside*) The shades are still down. (*Winks*)
(*Goes to kitchen and pours drink*)

"NBC, UPI
or AP, it's up to you
You're the writer
I'll swing it for the
extra billion or so cameras
and the mobile* units"

*a word, incidentally,
coined by 1956

Me again.
I'm waiting for the ice.
It's 108 to 200
on the 1st.
The count is 3:08
Pacific daylight savings time,
Los Angeles.
Back to you.

Hugh, Burgess Meredith;
Burgess Meredith, Hugh Downs."

(*They sing:*)

Welcome aboard
How do you do
I'm rather floored
I won't be bored
I won't be too
Now mine is your'd
And yours is two
Burgess'd Hugh!
O Hugh, thank you!
The mirror's doored!
I am too!
The governor's Ford
Barney's curfew cue.
Brought to you
By Burgess and Hugh
The fewer two!

5.

necessary
assurance
avoidance
reference
importance
indulgence
inherent
allowance
correspond
absence
possibility
available
excitement
assume

expectable
terrible
emphatic

are the words I use most frequently in the book I am working on, but continually misspell nonetheless. When the idea to list them here (rather, copy the list by the lamp beside me) came to me, I was afraid and tried to decide myself against it ... The words, I saw, were familiar to me in a way I'd never known before, and which, as such, listed so, had made me desperately aware of my total lack of say or sway over them. It was, in anticipation, as an enormous calculated bloop to dupe me. I felt pantsed.

6.

I am much more afraid of being pantsed, tho
than I am of showing my scrotum.
This wasn't the case in 1956,
but by about 1958 or so
I used to want to be pantsed very much
and thought of it often.
In fact, not infrequently
I pantsed myself, an unmarried man.
They, however, were sometimes married,
tho either way were always dressed the same
in cashmere sweaters, pushed up a little
at the sleeves, skirts all the way
down to the calves, and pumps, of course,
like college girls,
or at least movies
about college girls, 3:00 o'clock Sunday afternoon,
tv, home, the lawn cut, smell in the scuffs,
cars, cars, cars talked about ...

The intelligence wanders over mode.
Nine months later mode wanders thru intelligence.

Out of this ...

What comes of this ...

During and after this time,
whatever is made of this
is in fact made, and so is
what came of it
which may be the same thing
but which has also made you
feel for something else,
and not just what was made of it,
nor, necessarily, something
entirely new or different
or, for that matter, old, familiar,
but something nonetheless,
that is if what I said was the truth.

Aye

And here's another little item
I found wandering while making asterisk(s)

The truth is not for the animal:
It is the only thing wrong.

Accuracy.
Everything is accuracy.

That's all there is
on this boat.

And that's the trust I mentioned:
We should all trust everything
to be accurate.

(As they say in riding circles,
"Give him (the horse) his head.")

What else can you do?

Everything,
and whatever it is
it will be accurate,
if not the truth.

—Verily Carey

And thus (thus) faithful
to whatever it is.
(Act kisses fact.
Until one of them dies.)

Thus we are right back where we started..

Crap. Foiled.

Just a little stroll, folks,
out of the body and into the body ...

The score is
130 to 200

Just 70 more, think of it,
and the air won't be air.

(Vaudeville softshoe cross talk:)

What will the air be when it
won't be air?

I don't know, Sam, what *will* the air be
when it won't be air?

Why it'll be ... *(leans over and whispers)*

(expressing surprised astonishment:)
Why will it be ... *(leans over and whispers)?*

(Pauses) (Dies) (Comes to life)

(Thinks for a minute:)
Because it won't be air!!

(Insert something here, gentle Reader.
I have rejected "Shoots," "Trombones

in a strip joint pratfall slide,"
and "uproarious thigh-slap.")

8.

All of what you have read to this point
is all I wanted to write.

9.

I would very much like to see
Mick Jagger play Billy the Kid
in Michael McClure's play, *The Beard*.

"...juicy..."

—Allen Ginsberg

Mick Jagger is juicy, I think;
and so, in his way, is...

I am fairly certain
 that just about anyone
 in one way or another
is juicy.

 And I am glad
that this is something commendable
in a play.

 It certainly is in life
in not a few of its conditions.

Do you agree?

Do you have tits?

If you do, I am thinking
of one of them,
and there it is now!

(If you don't
imagine that you do,
or imagine me imagining
someone's who does

I feel juicy

or,
while I don't like
to send people to places
I know nothing about,
go on ahead
to the next table)

Now I am thinking of them both.
Both tits.
You're not dancing.
Don't know what you're doing
because pf your tits.
You know what I'm doing, tho,
and, unlike myself, you probably
know something else at the moment too.
Again, your tits aren't saying.
It is probably about, oh, feeding a dog
or doing something with money.
Perhaps you are in the process of being sure
these tits aren't your tits.

They are "too ..." something.
And you are probably right ...
Even if you have a mole
it isn't where it is here.
And that one is bigger than that one.
Just a little bigger ...
Well, whose isn't?
You call that a *little*?
And so forth.
I am quite sure now too.
As a matter of fact,
I have lost sight of those tits.
We're right.
We win.

There must be something legitimate
in this business...
A couple dozen lines back
I wanted to say

"It's a wonderful age"

—all my heart, no exclamation mark,
that kind of heart. No grammar.

The Beard

was juicy ... Mick Jagger ... the plants I live with—
me,
the clothes in the closet

were juicy ...
 it was damp in the air
and raining and wet out
 which can mean anything but
but was juicy ...
 I wanted to bite the windowsill
 my younger brother was getting laid
 the man across the street kicked back
 and giggled
two floors of a museum were filled
 with Jackson Pollock
 I had a handful of grapes
 the landlady entertained
 a man drunk watered his lawn
 half the night
Philip Whalen got his belly kissed
 and straw in his sweater
 okay!
the football team got soapy
 on my desk there was a magazine
 with a naked lady on the cover
 and inside a photograph
 of the juiciest girl I know
 a poem of mine all over it
 her
O-kay! O camshafts!
 shoop
 and a horse gets born
a party won't stop
 a hedge is full of pigeons
 leather is leather
 a cop sneaks a feel on the corner

the lights are left on
a fencepost sprouts
she squeezed a lemon on it
a cat's chased off the couch
in the garage
the governor gets a massage
everyone draws a picture
cloth falls
he swallows it
a girl is late for work
another girl

All these things actually happened.

I have come.

Two big deep green leaves
rubbed the front of a medical building
on Riverside Drive, Sherman Oaks, California
all this afternoon.

Won't we be surprised
when the very tits I did or did not
mispicture
show up on purpose
mispictured as the rest of you
all cool and wet.

Legitimate in this business
is plenty. I didn't think of lots
thinking what I did.
But I don't care.

You don't care.

And the 3 and 0 pitch—

Tit!

10.

Never try to make a friend
thru the mail, or even get acquainted
with someone that way. Many things
can happen, more things than you thought
a mailman could carry.

He carries it all, sure
He delivers none of it ... It's all
inside your head.

Nothing
was ever said at all, tho you sent
all of it, every last (I quote) "Ha! Ha!
That's the whole story.
Nothing else happens in this story.

11.

Listen—don't ever try to make a friend
thru the mail. Something happens
every time. I won't tell you
what happened to me, but it was really something.
I'll tell you that. I'll never do it again,
and if you're smart, you won't either.

12.

Just as the oleander creases, and loom is disenchanting dread
so there is a chance you might get a good used car
for the early morning worth it
trifling hood leaves
with a wind you understand, that's not a wind
but rather, Jerry, admiration
so much larger than your car
but no less your own unstill
although contentment is which you found least
interrogative pride
with fingers yet, uncrossed at that
forbid you it your hair
and all the fun of hair
and of things in the hair when—*when! when!*—
so long as they can't start the cavities—
they vie
the musics that winning they shall,
groomed newly, mate
as well as the minor turmeric sills near water
come by beyond the very oleander's babe, same
window too
endorsed solely though
with a brash wish youth still smells

singularly of the nap alive in kitchen
where by lentil fortunes his fruition first lent the
table breezes theme
thereby the dreams too nasal weather
day to the next day, four hundred programs

past

the last two staging tables—

and so it is

by music too, this hint

takes the luck out

clean right

and frames

as for your cent, sure,

your appreciation'd mudded the decade, boy,

now 'boy' at the old turmeric snoot

again, can, sure

goes the cent, going

is—truly—borne in something *ad*

as is whatever it exactly or in meekest symptom is
endeared by Jerry, not Pinaud,

as a wind, that's not a wind

but no less rakish 'straddle hair

though what is hair without its fame

is what is luck without music

locked in a called-upon pie she married Jerry to make
—for the day, the cooling commemorative—

all day in a car, larger,

with a wind larger, plus

music from the radio

louder than luck

all the way to the middle, or ides,

of wherever it was we all of us died

because it's

in the center doesn't mean it's right
so if you have them and haven't yet
uncross your fingers now
I thank you

13.

4:30 (2) MOVIE—Musical
"Rock, Pretty Baby." (1957) Twelve rock
'n' roll numbers are featured in this story
of a romance between a high school girl
and the leader of the school orchestra.
Sal Mineo, John Saxon. (90 min.)

Ten years later, the saxophone
is not electronic, nor anywheres near
a place where electricity may be hound
in appreciable amounts.

I like this pen better.

What is the *smell*?
Horrible!
It's coming from downstairs.

Mr. Mitchell is dissolving
the wife he never had

I just found out what the smell was.

In Sherman Oaks,
a suburb of Los Angeles
in the San Fernando Valley,
it is not without meaning
that the comforts resemble sleep
and often in fact
pass straight on into slumber
pass
the catsup don't wake your father.

The sleeps I most enjoyed in Sherman Oaks
were the ones that I "earned."

Imagine.

(Place photo here)

Later,
 tho it was quite prevalent
 in 1956 but not for me,
most of the girls I knew
or knew of through friends
also liked the same to be true of fucking—
tho more so of putting your fingers
where they thought you would.

They thought you would.

I think I will call fucking "getting wet"
the first chance I get when it may be noticed
and perhaps get a laugh.

I got a laugh once when quite spontaneously
I called fucking "getting ol' Punch and Judy
together again,"
 Who was I with?

(Suddenly and not surprisingly
I want to see them again.

Laughter is a great deal and nothing like
fucking in many ways.)

In that book I was telling you
about earlier, I had a man refer
to fucking as "dumping the chutney"
and laughed myself.

Suggestion: Put a photograph of you and someone
close to you standing outside, say, an automotive
repair shop or household appliance dealer over this
writing. Then think up or remember a lot of different
terms or phrases meaning "to fuck" (or "n the act
of fucking" or "to have fucked/in/slash/tense") (should
I leave that in?) ...

in a list ...

Put them all in two columns down the photograph,
using the buttons of your blouse or coat for
punctuation.

Great! Two people standing there between a pet shop
and a whole lot of things to call fucking!

Don't read the columns straight across.

Lerner's flapping
Pet boff hop

that made me laugh, oh yes!

14.

The crap that wins
stopped walking

Bottled waters' wit anticipates
all the lights inside there

Beige approvals, "them,"
would bannister tendency maybe

A revelation was this
curve not a niche

With innocence to incumbent neighbor calms
uncertain voices would figure to reflect

Eager the mathematic tabs
for impulse served in match-procedure

The time the eyes refused skill
look pamphleted "to look"

If flavors came named or selfish
no ingredient did

Unfortunate moment
had number

Where went agreement
went your butlering secret worth match

Excesses duly tainted
the edges' every next elaboration

Facts just after the supposed blackness' whirl
went less this than points

Beings tourists, lint could hardly threaten,
as the charm of clustered specialty
leashed our common cameras
ever near each other—
wines, dried soups, and hidden nougats—
all for later, home if possible,
though considering our impetuous frills in motion
little could survive unsealed,
excepting those packets of soup, the wine,
and the film inside our cameras.

The smashed were deemed abbreviated,
vile, no room for subsequence,
crimps to gimp premiere delights
abuzz at the ears of judges
especially off deserving
or out, who cares—
but these rainy boats in veteran impending!
away! avant!
—all color, doubtless,
in the vocal eye

so capsule and corklike—of pooh!

Get rid of them will you
just tell them all to go 'way

15.

Dear Mary—

Awoke this morning feeling not too well at all,
and thought it best to get going back while the going
was still good. Mary and I both were really looking
forward to seeing and talking with you, and shall
the next time we're up, which should be soon.

See you then...

Steve & Mary

16.

Jubilee fraught with lesson:

Some were embarrassed it wasn't "festival"

But the lesson made it all okay

But only until later: jubilee jubilee
jubilee jubilee jubilee

17.

'There certainly is nothing to do'
is what I first thought to put here
But I did, didn't I
and did again, and I
am eating lemon pudding

What is done is done again.
Still, you'd better let it dry first.

To win you must enter.
There is a door for every noise.
Winning is by and large noisy.
Concerned with this for long,
you will find doors to be offers.
The worst part is that everyone
will know what you're going to do next.

18.

Another herpes!!! Fuck!

The poison and the cortex win again.
All the yogurt and the special antitoxic stew—
nada.

FUCK!

Tanac.

The black bacteria took the red bacteria.
I am either doing something I shouldn't
or not doing something I should.

Or I'm doing neither.

I think I'm doing neither.
I haven't been feeling very well lately, see, and...
you understand.

Sure.

("Keep that ass against the margin there, S.")

The army invented the margin.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

Poison! Poison! Poison! Poison!
Poison! Poison! Poison! Poison!
Poison! Poison! Poison! Poison!

Where does it all come from?!

The army invented it.
(P.S. I know why they like to count.)

It comes from north
It comes from south
It comes from east
It comes from west

One
Two
Three
Four

And now the fruit flies to boot ...
Which I am never really sure aren't just
bored- and tired-eye fidgets,
although I swat at every one.
But I don't really mind them ...
It's better than poking
at one's favorite swollen lip.

Shit, the poison's in the air!

That doesn't give us much to start from,
not much to rescue.

But think! how very much there is to SAVE!

We'll start with the elements.

One
Two
Three
Four

Forget about the army.
They will poison themselves pure.

Now ... Fix my lip.

a loaf of French bread
3 red Bartlett pears
a carton of yogurt
a bunch of grapes
one half- gallon of milk
one quart of cream soda
2 sticks or butter
2 cans frozen tangerine juice
2 cans frozen limeade
2 oranges
a box of Raisin Bran
a box of chocolate chip cookies
3 packages of cigarettes
a *TV Guide*
a box of lemon cough drops

This man is Roy Orbison

(photo here)

I have it on good word
from a friend of mine whose dad
is in the business ... *that*,
as far as Texas goes,
Roy Orbison has the music business
sewn up.

19.

What's with all these photographs?
I'm not interested in photography,
at least not enough to give whole stanzas
of space in my poem to it.

Rather poor paragraphs too, or, at that. (You may
choose.)

Although it is true I am planning
a little book of photographs.
I don't know what I'll call it yet,
but it will be all pictures,
one per page, no words,
showing Mary and myself (alternated)

before each wall of each room
in our apartment here in Los Angeles,—
plus the view out all the windows
as they occur, and both views
from the middle of each doorway.

The book will be in three parts

- 1) The Front Room
- 2) The Kitchen & The Bedroom
- 3) The Bathroom

It is, actually, a treatise on the 90° angle,
or on perpendicularity,
depending on whether or not you like the book.

It will probably be called *Home* ...
And shall, contrary to current beliefs,
include the interiors of both closets.

All Color!

!!!Home!!!

Ed Ruscha has certainly made
some wonderful books of pictures, by the way.
He has also done some very remarkable paintings.
And even some paintings of pictures. Very good.

And Mason Williams' bus is sure great,
no doubt about that.

But really,
are those photographs
or are they books and buses?

I suppose it depends on whether or not
you like them,
as well as how you do it or not,
which is less your reason why than you (I)
might think.

I think they're friends.

I forgot what I was going to say.

Have you ever made an asterisk
with one of the Eagle Tip-type pens?
I have
a pinched nerve.

My camera was light green—
a Christmas present from John Ford.
I can't remember ever using it,
tho I'm sure I must have
quite a few times.

I won't ask where it is now,
but is it still green?
or did it ... melt?
And *what* did I photograph?

Matilija Ave.

a pinched nerve in my back

It came from writing on the bed like this
and leaning always to the left
my head in my palm
where it belongs

What a camera

I feel like I've forgotten everything
now

That's how it is when you live in
Los Angeles
No one to talk to so you complain
where you can
fuck up the progression

Mr. Rene Menoni
is going to take
all the photographs
for my book, *Home*.

Great to pertain/
by the way

I illustrated a book called *The California Papers* once.

Richard Brautigan liked the title.
Well, I liked *The Galilee Hitchhiker*.

Don Allen had such a full list
he just couldn't seriously consider it
at this time. However ...

Whoever heard of a lemon licking its lips?

But I need the Anti-Bacterial Action.

I need some of those little stickums
to keep the holes round
around the rings.

Many of the antis, it is worth knowing,
are no less poison than the infection.

Where are you if they counter-out
each other exactly?

Lots of very dark shit
if I'm not mistaken.

20.

You are seeing the death of beer,
and the Cardinals beat the Red Sox.

(*Later*): Correction: the Red Sox
beat the Cards.

It was counted.

Where are they if they counter-out
each other exactly?

Numbers can do that very easily.
All they have to do is meet.

It isn't at all strange
that numerical intercourse*

is perfect reflection,
not strange at all.

I'll pick this up again later.

*i.e digit-fuck.

Meanwhile:

But first:

Being human,
and having seen
the dissimilar twins*!,
we can disregard
the reflections
in this context
and direct ourselves
to the similarities.

Fuck the similarities!
Ban them from the elements!

(Note: The twins I knew considered
their biggest difference to be
the twelve, count 'em, minutes
between their births. Tick and Tock.)

Later. No, meanwhile:
(Tho what isn't meanwhile?)

It's all tied up in the 9th, folks.

54,000 fans up in the air—
question marks over their heads

That's all there is to pick up, evidently ...

*There is a baseball team called the Twins.

What a terrible thing to call a couple
a "match."

Here's a number,
right here ...

.
.
.
21.

The man sneezed.

He didn't have a cold.
He didn't have an allergy.
He had not just come out of water,
nor the meat freezer.
No one had tickled his nose with a feather.
There was no loose pepper nearby.
It was not dusty where he was.
He hadn't inhaled a thing into his nostril.

22.

My mind is on the fans.
54,000 of them now down below me
as I circle around in the Goodyear Blimp—
all faceless, but clear as hell

is every Ernie Bushmiller question mark
over their heads

The score is 5 to 5*—
the fucking 5's collided
ad it doesn't matter what the score is now.

What difference? What worth?

O something better happen soon.
Can you imagine going home in this condition?

(Incidentally, my wife makes some
of the most beautiful 5's,
you wouldn't believe.)

Blimps—okay but don't ever
try and parachute from a falling helicopter.

Many disagree, but for sheer and simple sexuality
I think the 3 has all the others beat by a mile.

*This is not to be confused with any of the scores of an
earlier game some pages back.

How about Paul Sérusier?

Now there's an interesting case.

Born in Paris in 1863, he had already
formed a group with his friends
at the Académie Julian—the Nabis—
before meeting Gauguin at Pont-Aven
in 1888. Next day
he painted a landscape. It is said
he knew too much, and died
in '27 at Morlaix.
Gauguin mistrusted him,
and I expect Bonnard did as well,
though perhaps a little more smilingly.

Paul Sérusier, ladies and germs.

When did he see his first machine?
Where, and do you suppose
Léger had a word or two
and knew what it was?

(Later they met with friends at the café
and talked it all over there.
It was quite a day, and they knew it.)

According to Sérusier,
the 3 is the first number
capable of defining a surface.

See the equilateral triangle:
a, b, c, d—a new dimension there!

It is only fitting, then,
that 3 be the sexiest—
even tho by Mary's 5 you'd never guess.

I've had enough of this.

23.

Speaking of cases
we really have to hand it to Blake Edwards
for calling his hero Gunn,
way back when he did. up front,

Good going, Blake.

Then there's Henry Mancini ...

Then there's this wire sculpture of a man ...

(*Note: delete or relocate*)

How much of the ump is with us?

LOTS

and it was the ump who said that.

Not the least of refreshing things
is being without the ump a while.

Love is just out in the lobby, then.
(that needs music, that does!)—
smoking, excited and possible—
that is one of its favorite parts,
being possible.

Too many ump's are let into the beds these days.
They've got no business in there,
get 'em out. There's no way
it can't be worth it.
The ump'll find you later, don't worry—
you can count on that.
Trust the ump.

So much is worth it.

Whenever I really know that
I am always out an example.

Then I always dislike having wanted one.

Ump.

And I've never been able to think
of an example of anything not worth it.

I suppose it's a ridiculous line of thought.
(If thought is ever a line it's in that.)

It's not so much it being worth it, anyway,
it's the feeling that makes you think
that's what you're feeling.

Many other fine things are like that,
it seems to me.

I just can't think of any right now.

25.

The Name Means Locust Posture

1. Lie on the chest.
2. Hold the arms by the side palms up.
3. Let the chin rest gently on the floor.
4. Raise the legs in straight position as much
as possible.

5. Retain for a few seconds and come back to
original position.
Repeat one to three times.

26.

Never geez on a full stomach

poof!

Wave goodbye to the afternoon
as we zip under the overpass
where a girl walks home with a bag of groceries
On every overpass in fact, zip
all never again seen
and only noticed by us (2) separately
as we zip discussing electricity
It's The Basin
It's The Brown
(we care about that)
and all the various trolls leave their names
for us in the underpasses
(we don't know if we care about that or not)

So
if you're ever in the LA Basin
ask anybody about Billy Al Bengston

Zip

Zip

Shall I ever be reminded?

Answer One: Not at this speed

Answer Two: I am always reminded

Both wrong.
The answer, of course,
is the third,
like in Jokes—the punch line.
I haven't got a third.

But at least it's a new season now,
so I know there is an answer.

The simple encouragement of change.

And that's what's lost
if the change is forced.

Which is why I say
never geez on a full stomach.

I don't want any answer at all.

I like the questions that are
signals of questions.

Very often I am ashamed
of some of those things
that encourage me
If an example
of this comes to me
before I finish
this poem
I will be sure
to tell you about it

Don't ask me why

I will never finish this poem.

Don't ask me why

"I mean everything!"
in one way or another.
"Yeah, I know."

I expect we all

in one way or another.

If an example of this comes to me
before I finish this poem
I will be sure to tell you about it.

I will never finish this poem

because/and I will never stop
making fun of myself.

Maybe it isn't a new season.

The air is not a different brown.
I am hot (tho the lady is not).
There is no mail.
There is no leaf here.
There is no time for tea (here).
The neighbors are creeps.
Those aren't any examples.
I am losing my hair
 and my pants.
Repeat one to three times.

27.

The lovely linen ads
in this *New Yorker*

28.

But there goes all but static worth
without a wave, a warning,
empty of rage,
just as soon as the energy
ain't your own

What makes it want
to go on forever (sometimes)?

Death...
 which means it

For a while we'll care
about that too

The huge Bathhurst sadness
found about intrigue
in one's own handwriting.
It cannot remedy the disinterest
but it tries until discovered.

And even then, so hardly alive, it moves
to some other sustaining innuendo
like subject.

What makes it want
to go on forever? sometimes?

Life
whose symptom may die, if you wish,
and still refuse to abandon you.

It means (it) more.

In spite of yourself
you mean it more.

(Can you still
just think bout getting off
and get off?

But I doubt Bill Bathurst
ever knew the sadness now with his name.
Like everything else, seemingly,
it's all just an idea of mine.

It's also a feeling,
tho the feeling wants nothing
to do with the name.

His name...
My feeling...
Author of both.

29.

Did he say
"the soul"
or
"this hole"?

If you were locked in a room
with only a calendar and nothing else,
what would you eat?

The dates.

Thru the *TV Guide*, boxed and wired,
time sounds off

(*marked out*)

(*marked out*)

There (here) I go
down the daily pages dawnless

One to another ...

On Tuesday, the 24th, *A Hard Day's Night*
will be shown in Los Angeles on Channel 4

But I will be in San Francisco,
driving around with Mike

(something done much better in LA)
in his blue Dodge van,

which I, among other things,
will have come to fetch

and drive down to Los Angeles,
perhaps with Mike, perhaps not,

to this apartment, which will be emptied
into the truck

and which will be driven, much slower,
up to San Francisco

via 99, and kept full
at the curbs outside various friends'

until we find and move into
a new apartment, perhaps with Mike,

perhaps not,
and which

he drove, alone,
this summer

east,
New York,

and up into Canada,
done, and home.

TODAY
This Week:
MIA FARROW
RETURNS
see page 10

is Saturday

I'll probably miss that too

He's home to get his degree,
which, he explains, won't
buy him any more gas.
Still we expect to do quite a lot
of traveling, after my book's done
and he's all thru.

He is probably my best friend.
Since I have known him.
I always seem to be happiest
when I live in the same city
he does.

That's the first time
I ever thought of it that way. Funny.

In San Francisco I'll have much less use
for both the television and the *TV Guide*.
It is sort of a David Smith sadness,
the television here,
or rather it's the way I remember feeling
a couple of years ago
when I read about him at Bolton's Landing—
how after all the guests were gone home
he usually went right to bed
and watched television all alone
until he went to sleep.

But again,
I doubt he ever felt
the way I felt he felt
and felt
reading about it.

This is an example
of what is so worrisome
to those who speculate
on the novel of the future.

I felt you felt he felt we felt
Which one wrote the book?
("They did!" will not be considered
suitable.)

When I watch television in Los Angeles
I know where I am
and not with whom
tho that only matters when it's possible to
which it indisputably isn't
and brown.
For a moment

I'm freely impossible
like none of it
like someone's idea
of someone else's imagination ...
What difference what decade, etc.!
and with music
I am permitted
the admiration of a staircase.
Am I
on board ship?
Is that Rio just ahead
its vertigo impolite?
We are all too taken
with the arrivals
of all these kissing incidents
ever and ever
right with presence
as expressed in hands
joined together
making shape
of these many people
each and every one of which
I want to say
will be completely new to you
in just one moment
as soon as we return
from this important message.

absolute candy
(dampness prat)
complaints
cautions
habits ...

Do I have to pass out to get out of here?

What I'd like to have is one of those silver suits
and walk thru fire ...

I'd like

to be impossible.

Hotsuits, the guy called them.

And color, too, conditions,
not to mention the shape it's in.

And cold ...

I'm in another place, see ... Let me
tell you about that.

Let me tell you about the only color
capable of endorsing any distinction
passed against it,
and the one color to whom such distinctions
can't and don't matter
whose actions
by their nature have but to substantiate
and befit these distinctions.

Brown

—Thought I left it,
never thought something that could be air
could also have shape

(e.g. LA)

and sit on a table
or be a rug
 on a room in another city.

Let me tell you about it.

My ass full of B₁₂,
 nerves,
 plans plans plans
 hard time swallowing?
 no, but—....

Howard Hughes built this whole airport
 for a movie

Here I am,
 here are my nerves
right in the middle of it

(the movie).

(Here comes a big one in
from the south, I think,
San Diego,
Are these old runways long enough
for jets?)

There is something very pleasant
about being good neighbors with your nerves—
spotting possible disputes at a distance
and getting together to work things out

which isn't to say either one of us disappear
(what good's a jet without nerves?).

Actually, I don't know what we do,
but as I mentioned there's no problem swallowing,
and on my way up the ramp (a greeting)
I wonder how much the B₁₂
has to do with all this.

"Forty-nine down is ill wind:
'Something that brings no good.'
"I don't know, Stan ..."

Dear Phillip, ...

Oh shit

"Getting off," I've heard it
and "speed" is what it's called.

Dear Peter Kanter,

You are without a doubt the funniest person I've
ever known in all my puff. but I can't go into all that
now. All I need is your name for the moment.

Thanks,
Steve

14,000 ft. over some squash (probably)
or melon farms

I don't remember nothing
I have no idea what I'm supposed to do

It's all come to me when I arrive,
won't it Mike?

Steve Carey 79 AP

Can I smoke now?

31.

Quick now

while the remedy
is still alive

and good in the blood

quick go up
and get some more

of whatever that stuff was before

we'll take it
easy this time

slow it down

we'll take it
right up face to face

with that miracle
they put in us

and just kiss it

real soft
shit
just kiss it

kiss it

and kiss it again
real soft
shit

and collide—just for what
there may be

in bounties to burlesques
of a light itself assumed

if as with most
it is chrome eternally featured,

actually credited
with some fantastic

persuasion over lights
otherwise virgin to the prism

who, to then,
hardly once, probably, among them

considered future lives
down amongst the glass and blinking

(ceaseless), glare,
the soot over all—

to be, if anything, embarrassing
a thought (no threat)

almost unthinkable,
strictly speaking, to all

of imagination,
from which nonsense

would suit up.

"It's time!" arrives, sudden but not surprising,
saying nothing of what it left.

You feel located—
in sensation as if moved
or relocated.

It is not overwhelming,
and impossible to like or dislike.

What will most often happen
is the landscape just then stamp,
noiselessly, a teeny bit sharper
undetectedly done around you.

At once it is apparent
nothing more will flash.

What you see, generally—
as you must—continues seen.

Sooner or later you come alive
to the explication of passing
through this scene, and see it
to be very much your own,
as it has been.

"A time," what's happened, has seized
an immediate agent from without,

whose due actuality may freely gather
with its symbol and pass
to its own registration for chance
de chance recall.

This is the street I may have mentioned to you in the depot. My street ... particularly this couple blocks ... and most particularly when wet, and one is awake all thru a dawn lost to greys of in-coming and out-going rains, fogs, threats of every style and shape frequent, all at separate elevations, going as they go, starting with the fog and working on up out the damn ethers etc. and then into all the 'ospheres and thin air. The fog stayed with us. Right here. I can see it get excited hanging around certain neon blink ads. So it's night, is it? Bull ... shit (as they say in Fontana). The fog is in the street, it's bright and an early near-dawn chill by the bay window hangs just out over the street.

Will it rain again you think? (There ought to be more possibilities than that!)

No sun up at all. Pretty soon it'll just be 'time' to do whatever it is you are going to do—and with a good bit of chatter too, no doubt, Bill.

(When the street is empty, and when it's wet, early in the morning at the window here, watching is just like walking.)

(Which of the two would I rather be doing right now?)

((Mike just got here and he wants to be robbing a liquor store.))

32.

One light or another,
none are mine for the moment

This is the other city

That is the other hill

What's this?

I am not a visitor here,
I am a guest.

(Thank you, David and Phoebe.)

You can tell by the way

I'm sitting in this chair,

and the noise

two rooms down,

the visitors

two rooms down.

It wasn't like this

when I was here before.

And what has happened to the thrill
of being temporary?

Everything is the same
And nothing is like it was

Thanks

Sorry

Hello

Why?

No

No

Then

How?

Them

Maybe

Please

Good

I mean it

Now

Again

Now

Transit mathematics

It's so hard to arrive and matter

What can you tell from here?

(assuming you knew what you were looking at, that is)

I don't even know I'm here

I'm here:

I know exactly (abstractly)

where I'm not

It's a busy life in the absences—
full of habits in other lights

questionnaire anticipations
imagination in the abstract

Oh go home

The home is in the head
BUT ...

And more and more and more and more and more

Is it alive? all this? seemingly so without me?

Yes.

1967

Los Angeles—San Francisco

Exhibits

Letters from Keith Abbott to Steve Carey (excerpts)

Letters from Philip Whalen to Steve Carey

Note from Margaret DeCoursey to Steve Carey

Manuscript cover of *Some LA Apartments*

DEAR STEVE:

THANKS FOR WRECKING MY DAY, pal. It was a Monday, 1:37 p.m. when the mail arrived. I had to a) read a history of sinsemilla in No. Calif. & b) continue editing it, & c) reread my great new/old play BURNT ARMS OF A SLOWDAY HERO, & d) figure out how to expand a certain Allison's part so I felt more like fiddling with her if she were real etc|you understand these concerns with imaginary (& real/characters) & e) go xerox same play for distribution to the actors & f|keyboard in certain editorial remarks/changes on Mordecial so That g) same could go to Hollywood for the three film producers & one agent could view same when what the fuck should amble through my mail box BUTA-FUCKING-GHOST-FROM-1967.

WHY DIDN'T YOU PUBLISH IT BEFORE?*

*You're a fucking idiot, that's why. Sitting on that all these years. Well. Anyway, so I do the lie with AP and can't get up for laughing.

[And re| your letter: tell Alice Not-to-B (or Bee) that she'll get hers from Pat, plus his next shaft of blinding light THE GREAT PRETENDERER because he's the publisher & takes care of comps etc plus wants his OWN book in the package. I assume you will, too, pal, as he got your address from me, while he was down for Kenward E's great review, which we both saw & gaped like the out of towners we are. On the floor funny. And it was so refreshing to see another writer go for broke, for a change.

How can I tell YOU about

WHAT A CHANGE

this typewriter with a memory makes in a) output b) editing & best of all, instant c) polish. Let's face it, pal, we are lazy. And the sight of 500 pages of novel scree are enough to x the eyes out, right? No more. Once in the memory banks, change only the changes not retype the perfect parts, I've upped my output & money by about half.

I am now contributing editor for Berkeley Monthly for ex simply because I have no fear about taking on articles/reviews/computer columns as it only takes me an hour or so to do them. I am also teaching kids programming, having finally found a use for the 2 1/2 years of logic training at the U of W oh so many years before. I've learned rudimentary BASIC computer language and now doing LOGO, all of which I find fairly

simple to do, once the logic ports are derusted & all those paradigms put back in operation on the Abbott wraparound brain. A little known fact about me is those years of heavy logic training with that maniac what's his name, (I can't even find out from my school records as I was too scared of him & his smarts to take his classes only audited them) whose wife went suicide & he drifted out six weeks later (must have seemed like years to him, space case as he was) & married a very young piece of fluff and stopped coming to logic class--thereby ending my interest too, as I was on the high octane with this guy (whose name is now gone) & didn't want to take a cut in my intake, so coldturkeyed logic, and started in on peyote & acid.

But that's just another story in this big town. Yeah, that was great, when I finally found out how hard Ted was for Shelly. I was wondering why he kept retelling that story of my taxi faux pas, the sucker didn't have the nerve to do it himself. HA HA HA. Taking a provincial to dowse the real city nittygritty. Much Later I read a poem of TB's and it all came clear. Well, too bad for him. At least I got to [prostrate] state my case in person, not some poem.

I got an Atari 800 (64K) with Atariwriter, in case yr innastered. All free, too, but anyway that's a long story, I also got an Apple IIe for research, also only 64K of memory, which is about 12-15 pages of prose on screen in computer memory before you have to shoot the info to the disk and start a new file/clean computer/screen memory.

The new Mordecai, for example, is 339 pages now (cut 10 pant-pant pp last edit) & is on 5 disks, about 60-70 pages per disk max, so could be 350 pages max. If you get the new cheapo Apple IIe with 128K & Applewriter word processing it would be heaven for novel writing. You're talking about 11-1500 dollars for apple IIe without a dotmatrix printer or letter quality if you dont mind slowboats etc. Atari's are cheaper, you can get computer/one disk drive/printer for about 900, plus 75\$ for word processor & hook up old TV or get monitor for another 200 or less. Get one, You will be Amazed.

Later: Back from dope book editing (terrible). Yeah, the poem to my mom has more to put in. I've got a few parts written & have to insert, edit etc. I liked GNEN a whole lot. It formed of scattered parts of a larger book, much larger, of poems written 1974-1984 called Routine Apparitions. About 150 pp with the Call Me Berrigan section included.

Dear Steve:

Your letter came just in the neck of time. My neck, actually, stretched out on the table in extreme fatigue as Michael Helm, editor, & I were wrassling over the last two gallies of, you guessed it, Mordecai of Monterey. It has been an exhausting tour of duty on that book. I hate big novels. & I despise big novel gallies. & Proofing!! Neverre wright one agin. Lots of work, antwork, as the Germans say, Ditzing & Finicking (an old dance duo from the early 30s, 'member? Ditzing later went on to do one movie with Fred Astaire's sister)

I loved AP. I just couldn't comprehend it all right away & preferred to send instant gratification (the delayed kind gets yellow & dries). Only thing is, why didn't you publish it etc etc. It's a young man's book, for sure. But no other young man has written one remotely like it, so it stands alone. I am happy to hear that JS blurred you. I saw the stylish ad in the FPNL. A little stark, but then you expect to sell to pals, right?

The stories, Harum Scarum, are doing okay here, got a rave from Greil Marcus in local mag, and apparently it has been nominated for both Pushcart Prize anthology and the St Lawrence Award. Not many reviews yet, so I wait. Sold one story for reprint & another possible, so maybe money. Well, yes, I am supposed to work on an RB piece. It is a long sorry story, really, from 1976 on. I was privileged with a stay at the Montana ranch, and so I caught a lot of the action there, mostly Hollywood, which was not very good for R's soul. But by then he was about 75% around the bend. Anyway, I did a memoir of 1966-68 for the

german edition of RB's selected works (never done) which later was reprinted in Review on Contemp. Fiction out of Chicago--a scattered attempt at explaining milieu etc to the unhip Germans, and later midwesterners. California magazine saw it and wants me to do a total memoir but I shall have to wait a bit, I think. At the time I was deeply shocked & grieved by his suicide, but the reports I had been getting had all been so dismal & drunken, that I expected him, as did everyone else, to die by misadventure, drink or....I have not worked out the logic of the suicide yet; I have to talk to Don Carpenter, who was one of the very few sane nonbarfly people left who were able to take R in even small doses in the last two years, apparently. The wake was very good for everyone, allowed people to get together & air things out. It was at Enrico's, SF life from top (Coppola, Phil & Rose Kaufman,) on down to the North Beachers. Ianthe was very composed, and very strong. His death was such a mess. The discovery came while I was in the middle of rehearsals for my play, and I took two days off, answering phones etc., before I could get composed and back to work. Tough times lately, with my friends. Real dark. Lots of death & destruction going on for some reason, or no reason.

Yes, I go up to Monte Rio to bookparty with Pat this weekend. He's been hard at work of late. I keep encouraging him to publish something big & impossible to ignore. He's on a long poem--I saw some & did slice & slash editing, and he took it back for more, I reckon. There's such a dreary scene here in poetry, that I have ignored same now for some five years, concentrating on stories & short novels & sometimes plays. This is the end of

1404 Cerro Gordo Road
Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

Dear Steve,

Thanks for the classy book. I like the parts in it - say every 6 pages or so - where you go absolutely crazy or totally disguised (e.g. section 12, p. 24ff.) (also from the second set of asterisks on p. 61 up to the words "the bitch" on p. 63.) (also from asterisks on p. 69 to "would suit up" on p. 71.) anyway I'm glad to have AP & glad that you had it published.

No, I can't come to NY for a while, although A.G. wants me to in May. I'm hung up crossways with my teacher & everything is taking longer for him to sort out, being that he's largely occupied with building a restaurant. And I have a slight feeling that I burnt down NY the last time I was there - I had no new stuff to

(over)

read, just barely sliding by on the strength of
being an historical object { "The Man who knew
Coolidge" }. when I come to see you again I want
to bring something substantial or at least
"interesting" with me.

I appreciate your offer & Alice's, to try
arranging things for this year, but I think it
would be better to wait until next year. I have
a strong hunch that I'll need lots of gigs then.
Sorry to sound picky & egomaniacal; I'd love to
see you & Marion & Alice & all my friends & I
remember the curry with great fondness & ad-
miration, but I really have to stay put here;
I suspect that it must be at least until the end
of this year. the way things are going now.

Please give my love to Marion & Alice.

love to you.

Phil

16:III:86

(6830)

1404 Cerro Gordo Road
Santa Fe, N.M. 87501

Dear Steve, I can't remember whether
I wrote to thank you for AP which
I've got a kick out of reading. Maybe
Horace was right - "publish, after ten
years" ? But I doubt it. What's good
is good; time doesn't have much to do with
it. One time I wrote,

The life of a poet -
less than $\frac{2}{3}$ ds of a second.

I hope you are feeling good. I am OK but
cranky - I've had to go on a strict diet
to get my weight down - & New Mexico, or
at least residence at Santa Fe is something
draggy. I made a week's visit to San Fran-
cisco, & that cheered me considerably.

Enclosed please find a Xerox of an
antibut production of yours. It was mis-

filed under something else. I've always
been fond of it.

Poor Alice wrote to me that the Poetry
Circus in Taos canceled her out & she had
the flu & yucky contact lenses. I wrote
her a consoling letter. Maybe she'll be visible
later. I hope she's better now.

I just received the Ginsberg festschrift
& must send congratulations to Bill Morgan.
It's a lovely book.

All best to you & Marion

Love,

Phil

26:VI:86

8/21/84

I don't like the way the artwork shows through the title page, and I think I'll change the paging to place the drawing on a separate sheet.

Please read it and mark any changes or corrections. I'm enclosing an airbill so that you can send it back w/o charges.

It's dull here - I miss you all. Is Joe having fun? If Marion wakes up, say hi for me.

Love,
Betsy

CALIFORNIA PAPERS
(BOOK III)

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HOMAGE TO ED RUSCHA:

SEPARATE TEXTS FOR
"SOME LOS ANGELES APARTMENTS"

* * *

For Alice Notley

