

Alec Soth's Archived Blog

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Friday Poem

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Weegee: Coney Island Beach After Midnight

by Joshua Weiner

No moon is good. I take off my shoes
And go silently so as not to lose
The shot I know is lurking there—
.....American made
.....Is my stock-in-trade,
As whatever's in the frame I choose,
I chose, though it's like I wasn't there.

What's out there? Why, sweethearts in love
Making love out where it's dark enough.
I wouldn't disturb them for the world.
.....Each kiss, what's left
.....Between each breath—
Hard work, but the kind that makes you laugh.
There goes a match. What's that I heard?

There, in the lifeguard station lookout,
Lovers exhausting each other's doubt.
I'll catch them fast without a flash:
.....To make it clear
.....How they appear
Like drags inhaling their way to ash,
Or a mouth getting ready to shout...

Too dark to have used the range finder there,
It's like scooping yourself, your feeling, where
Trying to find the way, you're caught
.....(The frame in which

.....Your subjects twitch)
Alive, exposed, and as if too near:
The lens opens and you take the shot.

Why they were up there near the sky
I thought I'd see as the fluid primed
The image into a final shape;
.....But all I found
.....Was a kind of sound,
A woman up there like a lie,
Alone and bewildered after the rape.

You can read the "Lifeguard Only" sign
She leans against. There's no clear line
Between her hair and where the night
.....Begins to fan
.....Out in a plan
Expanding further than stars can shine,
And outside my frame to make it right.

What did she choose, which choice was deferred
As she waited for the bus without a word
No matter where she sat to wait?
.....All that is there:
.....The apparent stare
Out to the wave that can't be heard
That she readies herself to contemplate.