

# Alec Soth's Archived Blog

July 6, 2007

## Friday Poem

Filed under: poetry — alecsothblog @ 12:03 am

### **The Motorcyclists**

by James Tate

My cuticles are a mess. Oh honey, by the way,  
did you like my new negligee? It's a replica  
of one Kim Novak wore in some movie or other.  
I wish I had a foot-long chili dog right now.  
Do you like fireworks, I mean not just on the 4th of July,  
but fireworks any time? There are people  
like that, you know. They're like people who like  
orchestra music, listen to it any time of day.  
Lopsided people, that's what my father calls them.  
Me, I'm easy to please. I like ping-pong and bobcats,  
shatterproof drinking glasses, the smell of kerosene,  
the crunch of carrots. I like caterpillars and  
whirlpools, too. What I hate most is being the first  
one at the scene of a bad accident.

Do I smell like garlic? Are we still in Kansas?  
I once had a chiropractor make a pass at me,  
did I ever tell you that? He said that your spine  
is happiest when you're snuggling. Sounds kind  
of sweet now when I tell you, but he was a creep.  
Do you know that I have never understood what they meant  
by "grassy knoll." It sounds so idyllic, a place to go  
to dream your life away, not kill somebody. They  
should have called it something like "the grudging notch."  
But I guess that's life. What is it they always say?  
"It's always the sweetest ones that break your heart."  
You getting hungry yet, hon? I am. When I was seven

I sat in our field and ate an entire eggplant  
right off the vine. Dad loves to tell that story,  
  
but I still can't eat eggplant. He says I'll be the first  
woman President, it'd be a waste since I talk so much.  
Which do you think the fixtures are in the bathroom  
at the White House, gold or brass? It'd be okay with me  
if they were just brass. Honey, can we stop soon?  
I really hate to say it but I need a lady's room.

### **3 Comments**

1. My girlfriend hates her job. Just now I called her on the phone and read this poem aloud. It made her laugh out loud and she's probably still smiling about it right now as she works on billing for the month. Thanks.

*Comment by Cary — July 6, 2007 @ 11:34 am*

2. What fascinates me is that this could have happened 30 years- or a few weeks ago. There's something very comforting about that.

*Comment by Nicola — July 6, 2007 @ 8:47 pm*

3. I like listen to people who go on rambling like that, and I seem to attract them, I just have to sit at a bus stop and here they come.  
But it's ok, I smile and nod, they are easy, they wrap me their world and thoughts and off they go when the bus come in.  
If it's my bus too, I wait for the next one...  
I never thought of what they are saying as poetry, I will now.

*Comment by Brigitte — July 7, 2007 @ 3:18 am*