



PABLO PICASSO, "HEAD OF A GIRL" (1946)

## POETRY

### MONDO REALITY: TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Now the hippies are all fortyish and butterflies in Hollywood are rare;  
The monarchs in their dusty grandeur that used to flutter by my window  
Have been replaced by boulevard drag-queens — strangers in the night.  
And the love that prevailed in the avenues and canyons of the 60s  
Has been transformed into thunderheads of anger —  
And it's all too simplistic to be glib  
And say that anger is just love having a bad day.

My home seems to be decorated most in dreams —  
Those little slices of yesterday's trifles  
That turn up the corners of my mouth  
And curl the edges of yellowing graduation pictures.  
Sitting around listening to golden classics on the radio  
Used to be Perry Como and Rosemary Clooney;  
Now it's Neil Young and Mick Jagger —  
And Elvis gives a whole new meaning to "oldie-but-mouldy."

It's harder for an aesthetic to live in Hollywood than ever before.  
The intrusions of psychobabble and neighborhood packs of dogs and kids  
Have become an audio-obstacle designed to challenge creative concentration;  
Anger erupts in a cacophony of horror — gunshots and bones breaking;  
Civilization hurtles blindly toward sociopathic perversions.  
You know the excrement has really struck the rotary cooling device  
When people in alleys are trying to live out their sweaty little fantasies  
Instead of indulging in the simple sin of Playboy, one-handed in bed.

L. B. DORAN-MAURER

### POEM FOR MY MOTHER

25 years later  
& I'm still awake  
can't sleep  
not even trying  
to turn night  
into day  
just reaching out  
beyond my bed  
for matches &  
a cigarette &  
pencil & paper  
to imagine you  
IMMENSE BUT TRANSITORY  
pulling back the blankets  
& tucking me in  
& then  
I burnt  
my fingers.

MARTY CHRISTENSEN

### THE WAVE ADVANCES

The wave advances — one wave breaking another's backbone,  
Flinging itself at the moon in slavish yearning.  
And these young troughs, janissaries —  
The tireless metropolis of breakers —  
Rave, slant-eyed, and dig their ditch in sand.

But through the flaky gloom-laden air  
An unbuilt wall's pale teeth loom up.  
From foaming stairs the soldiers of suspicious sultans  
Crash — smashed into spray.  
Cold eunuchs bring the poison in.

OSIP MANDELSTAM

### WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE

The sweet shade of girls in their teens,  
no better place to lie down and rest.  
The shade is green, lacelike, useless,  
the unripened fruit just out of reach.  
You just can't reach... The shadows  
cover the ground, a quivering net.

Their smiles are so far away.  
Inside you twists a longing  
they've never known. The young girls  
laugh and dance, floating on air,  
each name called out a hidden  
caress.

They'll marry, but they won't marry you.  
And marry they do — try to stop them.  
In the middle of the park, on the promenade,  
a blind man waits impatiently for an arm,  
all the arms twist into a noose,  
but don't hang yourself or waste your time  
in a thousand Proustian analyses,  
son.

On the promenade, beneath the tree,  
the girls' shadows sink into the blind man,  
and the day that dawns behind his eyes  
is blurry and quiet, like a Sunday.  
And in him all the bells ring out,  
and in the shade desires die out,  
ripe fruit falling to the ground and splitting  
open.

CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE

### AFTER A SEASON OF NO SONG

Green buds cover branches,  
Juxtaposed against stark, brown  
Tree limbs, recovering from  
Winter's frozen ground.

Wild roses' — visions in yellows,  
Royal reds and pinks — pungent  
Aromas mingle with piquant scents  
Of honeysuckle blossoms, citrus.

Birds, perched on branches, call  
In hopeful bursts of sound;  
Sweet notes from grateful throats  
Heard after a season of no song.

With the air of Spring's expectancy,  
We wander on a light wind;  
The beauty of beginnings, manifest,  
All around.

DAVID M. LORING

### THE CIRCUS

You say we need to be happy because  
The material world is a door  
That never closes, a jewel  
Of astonishing purity,  
A love incapable of weakening,  
Plantlife that simply grows and grows.  
It's a business that won't lay off its employees,  
And a terrific circus.

See? See? Of course I know all this.  
Who doesn't know it?  
Even my viruses want to celebrate  
Christmas and Easter  
And attend the opera.  
Even my white blood corpuscles intend  
To vote in the next Presidential election.  
So please explain to me  
Why I am crying now,  
Why I am sick of it,  
That's what's unclear.

ALICIA OSTRIKER

### 11:47

The spider of night  
crawls up my spine.  
And just like me  
the night has nowhere to go.  
Inside the tiny room  
the walls ease in on me,  
as my 9-inch black-and-white  
beams bad messages into my brain,  
but I can't make up my mind  
to turn it off.  
I need to get up  
and go out and find someone,  
I'm sure there is someone  
out there in the night  
who can help me.

DAVID ELSEY