



Image from *Chronicles of Sunport*

Roland Marty

fault line

Spin the bottle, gather round, no one dares make a sound
But me—
Pigeon drinks the poison water—
Get out, get out, get out, get out, get out—
Tell me where, tell me where, tell me where
To go.

“That gentleman wouldn’t know I was there if I fell on him.”

Two five-hundred-pounders, bombs away!
Gunmen in the open, the air strike called,
Impact fused, target hit to good effect:
We made believers of a wedding party.
That’s how we do it in Afghanistan.

“As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.
World without end. God bless America. Thank you and good night.”

Hildegard McKisco at the wedding reception, drinking cold champagne,
She sees the young man’s probing eyes and keeps her smile inside.
Yes, they’re 44-DD, dear—and you’ll see much more of them later.

Her gourmet pizza's lost its heat, and springtime is at hand.

"Just once in your life, do you think you could do something
You're not ready for?"

My father was a drinking man, he spent a lifetime drunk,
With bits of wisdom washing up like driftwood on his shore.
:"If you remember nothing else, boy, remember this one thing:
A good heart, it's worth more, much more, than all this world's brains,
And decency's worth more than sense, and the bloom
Must leave the rose."

"We have crossed our Rubicon, my dear—
There is no going back."

Today's the day the circus comes to town,
With dancing bears and monkeys dressed as clowns.
There's a lion and a lamb, the pair as thick as thieves,
They'll be the best of friends till dinnertime.

"Crash-boom-bang! Jigger and poof!"

Sleep in circles, rising ground, deeper waters all around—
Come and see! Come and see! It's the very latest thing:
Psilocybin in a can! (It's organic, even the can!)—
An obelisk of jet-black stone, a mile high or more,
And on its summit's carved a name that no one can remember.

"Swiftly runs the frisking lamb into an unknown fate."

From the hard Antarctic ice, pious penguins carve a cathedral,
Using only hope.

"A sea-salty bird, a catatonic sailor, a waking dream."

Softly, light ascending to strike the Golden Bowl,
As gentle, a kiss of light, shining brightly, dazzling, resplendent.

"In your eyes, the recognition glows, and in that glow my soul is born anew."

Zelda ne plus ultra

The vicious geometry of love,
The ascending curve and the obtuse angle.

She's in her priestly garb well-dressed, black boots and bustier,
Taking the auspices with my entrails; I play the gracious sacrificial goat,
A spectator at mine own disembowelment; she used her sharpest knife for me,
Her eyes see everything, her fingers trace the outline of a dream.

Across the river Styx we go, a jolly little outing.
The ferryman is pleased indeed: we paid his fee in blood.
We brought a band along with us, they play a merry tune:
A rhapsody for car-horns, with dulcimer and kazoo.
But when the farther shore was reached, with her I could not go—
Oh no, she bade me not to go, oh no, not yet, oh no no no.
She told me she would wait for me, but not in Hades' gloom:
Upon the strand of Avalon, beneath the Harvest Moon.

Green meadow as the night falls near, in a place far, far away, and I see her:
A fleeting form most transient, of lightest gossamer, she floats from here to now;
High above, in a nest of crows, the mother feeds her young, for even carrion birds
Know what love is. A lute playing, somewhere.

Delicate fingers dance along the edges of the valley,
Soft kiss to bring the morning rain anew.
She lit the candles one by one and made the darkness glitter;
Round the altar, piled high, the hearts of many men, still beating.

Red-haired nymph of these fair woods, a dryad light and free to dance athwart the
Rushing river, its waters swollen full with snow-pack's melt of luscious springtime
always
Yearning and returning as the limpid waters flowing downward, ever downward
Unto the frozen sea.

Vision of Zelda come again, a well-fondled memory come again, again, again,
She walks with me past gray stone walls beneath the Hunter's moon.
From the shadows of the graveyard, from behind mossy tumbled heavy stones,
Their melted faces watch us as we pass.

Within the shattered ruins, among yon factory's remains, on crumbling brick of
wall forlorn,
Spray-painted in red by hands unknown, in shining letters high and tall, a message:
MACHINES LIKE MEN
MEN LIKE GHOSTS

“You were made to be a velvet glove. I was made to be a hammer.”

Roland Marty lives in Michigan.