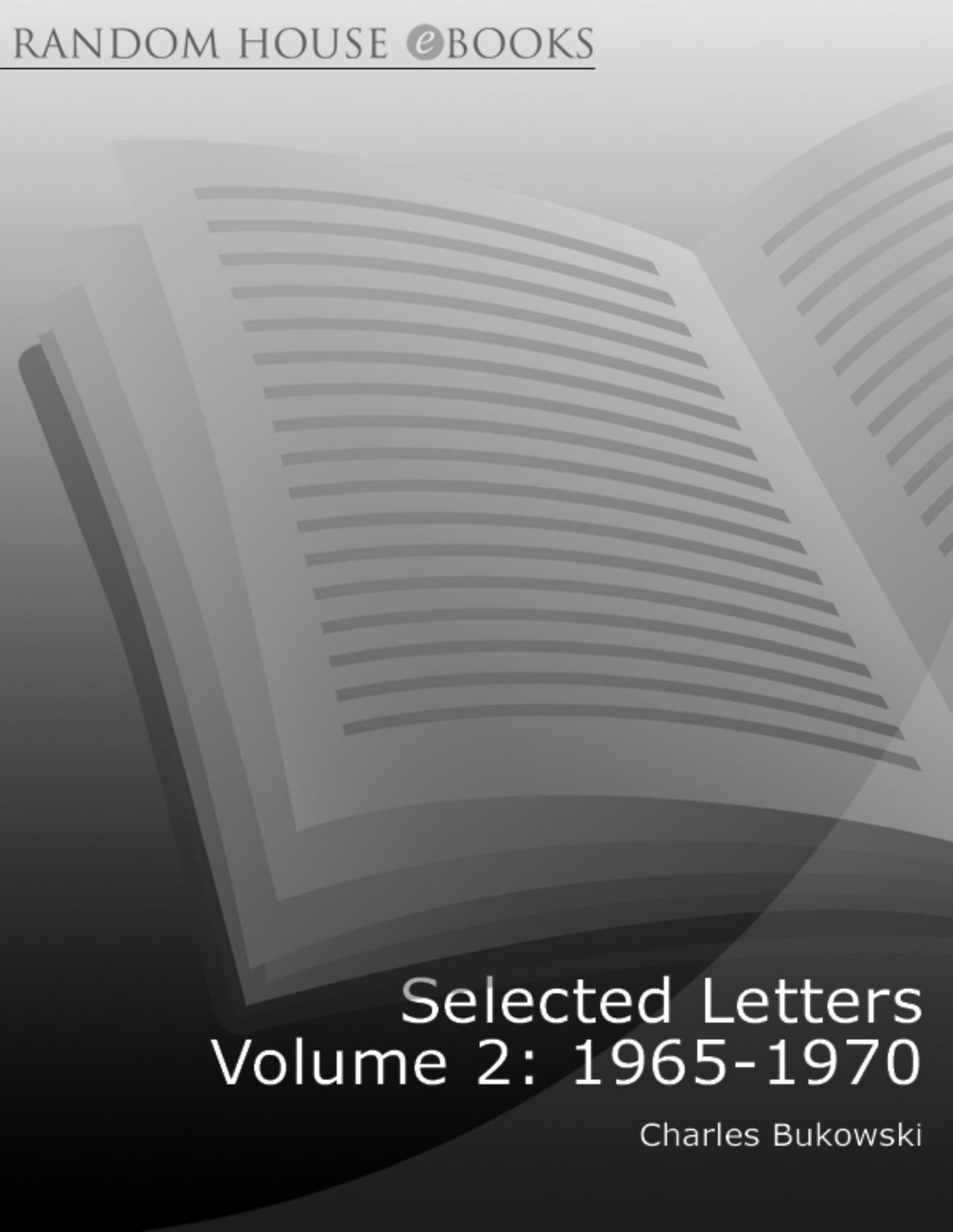


RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Selected Letters
Volume 2: 1965-1970

Charles Bukowski

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About the Book

I wrote letters to many in those days ... it was rather my way of screaming from my cage.'

The 1960's saw Charles Bukowski struggle for recognition and slowly emerge as a unique, talented and prolific poet and writer, whilst holding down a day job at the Post Office.

In Selected Letters: Volume 2 we see Bukowski becoming accustomed to his career as a professional writer. These letters to various friends, lovers and literary contacts provide an intimate and fascinating look at Bukowski's mind, his emotions, his attitude towards his own creativity and the comings and goings of his daily life.

Other books by Charles Bukowski available from Virgin Books:

Post Office

Factotum

Women

Pulp

New Poems Book 1

New Poems Book 2

New Poems Book 3

Selected Letters Volume 1

Charles Bukowski

Selected Letters Volume 2
1965-1970



EDITOR'S NOTE

This second volume of Bukowski's letters begins in the 1960s. As that decade ends, Bukowski is liberated from the drudgery of his post office job and embarks with some trepidation on his career as a professional writer, encouraged by a small regular stipend from his publisher John Martin, who undertook to pay him \$100 a month to enable him to write full-time.

As in volume 1, the letters have been selected and transcribed from photocopies furnished by libraries and individuals. Bukowski's correspondence was astonishingly voluminous, and only selections are given from most letters. Editorial omissions are indicated by asterisks in square brackets, thus: [* * *]. Ellipses in the original letters are indicated by three dots. Bukowski often typed in CAPITALS for emphasis or for tides. Here, book titles are printed in *italics*, poem titles in quotes, and emphatic capitals in SMALL CAPS.

Dates are regularized and sometimes supplied from postmarks or guessed at from other evidence. A few spelling errors have been silently corrected. Salutations and signatures are for the most part omitted, except for a few examples that give the characteristic flavor. Some attempt is made to preserve Bukowski's layout, which at times includes multiple margins, but a printed book cannot reproduce such effects unaltered. As in the previous volume, a few letters have been printed verbatim to give the flavor of a completely unedited letter.

References to *Hank* in the editorial matter are to Neeli Cherkovsky's biography of Bukowski, published by Random

House in 1991.

• 1965 •

At Bukowski's instigation, Purdy had sent poems to Douglas Blazek for Ole.

[To Al Purdy]
July 5, 1965

YES, I WOULDN'T have wanted your poems for *Ole* if I didn't think the mag was a kind of powerhouse, and that's why I like to stick my stuff in there when I can ... I guess you read the essay I wrote about a part of my youth for *Ole #2*; it was kind of a loose thing, but have gotten more comment on that than on anything I have written, and I doubt that any other mag slick slim or snobbish would have run it. They are also going to bring out a booklet thing, prose I wrote. *Confessions of a Man Insane Enough to Live with Beasts*, which I also don't think anyone else would publish, and christ, if you don't have outlet, you choke. I believe that rejection is good for the soul if you are not a quitter, but my soul has had plenty of that. [* * *]

[To Douglas Blazek]
July 8, 1965

[* * *] a small sparrow in the bush outside the window, ream-beaking his feathers in the 4 p.m. sun, and I've got to take a shit, just got a tune-up on my '57 plymouth and the thing runs worse than ever, what the fuck? well it's good to have a car like that, once in a while somebody'll say, 'why

don't you come over for dinner?' and I can just say, 'Car won't make it.' I don't have to tell them that time is scarcer than young pussy around here, and I don't mean time to write POETRY. I mean time to lay in bed, alone, and stare up at the ceiling and not think at all, not at all, not at all.... [* * *]

William Wantling contributed to many of the same magazines as Bukowski and had a book published by Douglas Blazek. An ex-convict who had spent five years in San Quentin, he took an interest in matters such as capital punishment and penal reform (see Hank, [see here](#)).

[To William Wantling]

July 9, 1965

no, haven't made a dime on poetry but am supposed to get 10 cents a copy on all *Crucifix*'s sold and there were over 3,000 of them printed but I don't know if I can trust Park ave. I never saw the contract. Also supposed to get 10 percent from *Poems Written Before Jumping from an 8 Story Window* and am supposed to get 50 percent from a BORDER PRESS book of drawings, both of these supposedly to be issued this Fall, but, after all, I've only been writing poetry since I was 35 - about ten years ago, and I figure about ten cents a year would be very good pay, hell, that reminds me, I did get \$2 for a poem once, a horrible thing in *Flame*, and Garner of the extinct *Targets* sent me checks of \$10 or more 3 times for large groups of poems - so shit, I did make my dime on poetry, and when I was young and used to go the short story - \$25 for one from *Story* and ten bucks for one from *Portfolio*, so I've made around \$80 writing and no end in sight except the a-bomb.

I don't know about this anarchist handbook, I really wouldn't know who to burn or who to put in if I tore down the works, the way I see it you ream out one piece of shit and substitute another for it, in the human mechanism - soul, balls, brain - there simply isn't enough there; it's a bad party, good guys in or not. ... [* * *] everything here sags, now toothache, out of beer, car stalls in streets and they honk honk honk and I push it to the curb and think it's time they dropped the god damned hydrogen bomb and got everything over with, there's your anarchy - it'll come from the top and they won't know it, except the few big fat fuckers who get away on that space ship to another planet. I hate teeth, shit's all right if it's yours, but teeth, no, soulless shirks of things, fangs into brain center pulling ... puking. [* * *]

[To Tom McNamara]
July 14, 1965

yours was a good letter in courage but no more than I would expect from a guy like you living on the edge of hell, you've got it, and I could no more give a damn whether you were a latent or an unlatent homo or a desk drawer - although one always gets a little touchy about this subject and feels as if he were saluting the flag, and if you talk enough about it somebody points a finger at you and says, 'you are a homo yourself!' same with Shannon - what he is as a sexual weapon or tool or plant doesn't matter to me - he writes a good letter and had a beer with me, and to hell with it.

bad day at track today, hot sweaty hot crotches of whores and maidens and men and jocks and newsboys stank and I made some bad plays against my reason, feeling my 45 years jumbling in my balls and getting a little

down with EFFORT, the old death-wish assuming its effrontery, and I drank too much out there and sun came down and the whole world stank.

I guess it works like this in Spain too, or The United Arab Republic, and I have some sketches to make for a book of sketches drawings due in Nov. and I can't get rolling, I think of ants and garters and wire of cheese, and madmen dicing up committees of kangaroo, wawa, didn't d. h. lawrence write a bad one about a kangaroo? a novel? well, who cares? he hadda eat, I hadda eat, I do things I do not like to do either but not yet on a typing machine although I guess there's not much difference if you hold it under strong glass ... christ, I'm tired, think of all the piss pissed away today; not the shit, just the piss, momentous, think of all the poems written today, then if you want to, think of all the shit. I donate, when the cat comes home in the morning I'll have 3 pears on my head.

I am pretty well on the way and listening to some Beethoven; (on radio) - with music I like what I care for, and sometimes it's jazz or whatever or sentimental or sound that strikes against my arms under electric light just right, awwha, you ever get that guy fucking with your mailbox?

Find a way to survive that does not cut too much of a hole in you or anybody else, said the holy man, and then he lifted out his palm and I dropped in the pecan shell and the lighted cigarette butt, and victory is not what you capture but rather what you don't want to capture, and I've wanted to be a monk but the robes are hot and they itch and I'm afraid I'd meet the same men there too - dressed differently, conch auszieh tusche schwarz! this is a dull one! like I told you, I am on the way, and the woman's in the bathroom and the baby fell, YAAAH!!! more death on a fork, by midnight I will know no more; I will be sitting naked on the edge of the bed spitting invective out of my broken teeth out of the m.g.'d psyche, slabs of fat rolling

like bread dough white and gummy over my gut, my face hacked with the bad years, my eyes sucked out by the snakes, I will be sitting on the edge of the bed ... mumbling, twitching, shading myself against the walls, shading myself against my self, the elves, the whores, taxes, love and demolition, it will be a more drab-plink night than the one before and finally it will be a little while safe in the barbwire of sleep, sweet picture of groveling snail can't breathe.

I used to lean slightly toward the liberal left but the crew that's involved, in spite of the ideas, are a thin & grafted-like type of human, blank-eyed and throwing words like vomit, essentially they are *very* lonely, the secret is really that they have not put society down but that society has put them down and so now they gather and hand-hold through 1/4 souls and play at tinkertoy games with 1/8 minds, there's nothing left to do except admit that they are slugs, worms, and they are not going to do that. I do not say that these people do not sometimes do things for the betterment of mankind; I only say that they give me a pain in the ass when I have to sit in the same room with them. I am essentially a loner and now that I've got hung with child and woman a lot of people are coming through my door (her friends) that I would never have to look upon, christ, this is a bitter letter, maybe it was the phone call, she's still talking, 'yes, the writer needs to make such a thing *vivid*, give it *vividness*....' it's the same old swill I heard on campus so long ago, god damn, Tom, am I insane? it seems to me as if everything is the same mouth saying the same thing over and over again from all these bodies and faces that also look the same, sometimes I feel sick, sick, disgusted, you get your faith up again and again; then it's like trying to climb a mountain for a good hot piece of ass or a fifth of good scotch at the peak, and what do you find? a basketful of worms.

I'm going to get something to drink, you slam through that novel.

the realest part of the leg is
where is ends, like the mind
becoming soul or an apple thrown into
the sea

p.s. - christ, don't get me wrong. I'm no John Bircher or am I for the power boys at all, nine, nine, I only like time to lay around and stare at the ceiling for a while without voices around or bodies with voices, like that.

The following letter is printed entire and verbatim.

[To Douglas Blazek]
[July 14, 1965]

July 14 in 1965 in Los Angeles in America in a kitchen drinking beer and smoking a Dutch Master panatella, and lost \$8 at the races today, and listening to Schumann I think ...

aye, Blazer:

you're right, I have been feeling down DOWN and almost did the Big Thing last Sunday, but that's talk, Krist, I'm still here with 14 half-quarts of beer, stocking feet, red-eyed, misty of brain, gaga fk goofy, and the man on the radio asks me:

'Have you made your will yet?'

I don't answer him.

MORE THAN THE BLUES, MORE THAN A SPIDER
CRAWLING NEAR THE CORNER OF THE WALL:

quite quite quite
quit quit quit

I want to quit
I am not brave
I do not want to fight
I want to stay under the covers and
 cry cry cry
I don't want to see a
 human
I want to sleep

I will stay here until they come and
get me
or the meat disappears from the
bones and I am
beautiful
again

this is a free poem to hang in your bathroom in case you run out of paper.

I will send the letters I will send the letters I will send the letters, it is only that I have been a little goofy and some things going wrong - no need a list - I am being chewed to pieces by everything, and if I were a smooth gentleman I would not admit this - but I eat hash, hate policemen, baseball, squaredances, nuns, factories, goatees, barbers and old women who want respect only because they are old women. I will send the letters, only like I said most of them are not so good, god damn it, yours, Purdy's, and then that's it. I will send yours in seperate envelope so as not to defile their good guts, it's a matter of getting to a postoffice and I will be very haappy when i get up the verve to seeit done. I am half-assed weak or something lately, how about death by cannon, Blaz? shit, great, eh man? completely blown apart in the public square, in the park on a Wednesday afternoon under a statue of Grant or Lincoln or Beethoven or Lee! in the sunshine! poems blown to pigeons. I've never seen a statue

of Christ in the park, any park, I guess they don't want the birdshit on his brain, I saw one once in a glass case and I was drunk and felt like getting up in there with him, it was night and he was under a small blue light but I didn't get in there with him (Him, I mean). I was too much in a hurry to get to my place and knock off a piece of ass from this longlegged wino whore I was living with at the time, she's dead now, poor slit, which reminds me - once I was drunk in Inglewood and I was walking down the street and I saw this mortuary, it was 2 a.m. in the morning and you know how mortuaries are out here, the big ones, those long flat steps leading up to a kind of white colonial granduer and they keep the bright big lights on all night, and I climbed up on the top step and stretched out and passed out on those mortuary steps until the police came and got me, and when the judge sentenced me he not only sentenced me for drunkenness but also for BLOCKING TRAFFIC! - ain't that the shits? you know there aren't many cars at that time of the morning but so many of them stopped to look at the body on the top step that it caused a jam. I guess they thought I was dead and that's what I wanted them to think, chop up the smooth jugular vein of their sleep-within-Life, the fuckers. I don't do this so much anymore because there is this ten-month old kid as an excuse, and I shouldn't use it; but you know I used to conk out everywhere, there was one of my favorite hills, I believe it was Westview street just above 21st, and the hill was very steep a dark steep street going straight down without lights, and I'd get drunk and just lay myself down in the center of the street right near the top and pass out, a car never got me, although once a woman came by and screamed when she saw me out there and it brought me to and I lifted my head and looked at her and said, 'Don't worry, baby, I don't want to FUCK you, you are too ugly, you are a shitty ugly looking human being because you live like a roach!' she disgusted me so much that I got up and staggered after her until she ran into a

house, then there was an alley behind a bar in Philly, I think the bar was at 16th, and Fairmount, a real piss hole and I ran errands for sandwiches and begged for drinks and shook the pinball machine for drinks and talked for drinks (I *used* to be a good talker) and about noon I'd go into my first phase of drunkenness and walk out into the alley and lay down, and I knew these trucks used the alley to deliver and pickup stuff from the warehouses but since it was noon or one p.m. they had some chance to see me, and they had little houses in there that the blacks lived in and the kids would come out and throw rocks at me or poke me in the back with sticks, and I'd hear the mammy's voice finally, 'Now you childrens leave dat man alone!!' and the truck didn't come by. I am writing you now and I have 12 beers left. I been thinking about Wantling, got a rather (what?) knifey postcard from him today because I had told him in a letter that I was rather disappointed with anarchy and revolution because the way I saw it shit was only replaced with more shit, he inferred that I was getting old and - 'that terd yr carrying in your pocket, throw it out, somebody might throw you back a diamond.' I don't intend to argue with him; yet it's true that I don't have much hope. I don't disrespect either his hope or his energy, or his work. I give money to people on the streets, a woman stopped me the other night. I know I shouldn't, it doesn't help, maybe I should have fucked her. I am tired of pain, mass anarchy is more pain, more error. I don't know what to do, shit, I know about the corruption, the lie of office and govt., but these are only men and if we put them in different jars with different labels they will remain only men, and the process is slow, most surely almost 2,000 years wasted, but I don't know if i could kill a man or even say that I thought I was right about anything.

and even tho W. infers that I am old, I infer that he is YOUNG in spite of the 5 and one half years he did, and there goes *that* argument. I suppose now that I will be referred to

as an extreme rightist and that I voted for Barry while I was disguised in a stocking mask. - yet, W. is right: our anarchy is best served in the poetry we write, do you think we'll all end up writing stuff for *The New Yorker* and *Esquire*? how much ya wanna bet some of us do? and *Evergreen Review* is halfway there.

Got your flyer on *Ole* and the chapbooks, and well done, baby, well done, although reading about myself this CHARLES BUKOWSKI, seems very strange. I seem to see some pisser done up in white robes and tilting a winebottle, where is he? sitting in the ants? tickling his belly with red turpentine?

look here, Bensenville, from *Mo tzu*:

5. Seven causes of anxiety: bad city walls, no allies, careless expenditure, incompetent officials, overconfidence of sovereign, failure to recognize loyal officials, crop failures. Reduce expenditures and be prepared.

14. 16. Love everybody uniformly.

17. 19. Against offensive war.

26. 28. Will of Sky.

(oh shit, I just spilled beer over my cigars! will of Sky? lucky they in cellophane, me drunk again? Blaz, you're only person I know who is worse speller than I, you must be good person, yes, you are not interested in hopscotch while the walls are on fire.)

31. Ghosts.

35-37. Against belief in Fate.

39. Against Confucianists who love narrowly, like music, and believe in Fate.

(if I were Wantling I would say that Fate is an excuse for lack of courage and disorder. I'll say it anyhow, although it's too simple - and not always so.)

(Stevenson died. I saw the headlines, when E. E. Cummings died somebody told me - 5 days later.)

(ho, I am growing old old, silver threads amongst the gold, the kid keeps crawling in and I sit her up here and she bangs against the keys, and I am the man who once sneered at babies in carriages and dull-faced men walking along with their dull-faced wives.)

oh hell, I have been reading some shit about summoning a gamekeeper with a hat of feathers, it should not be done, you use a hat of fur, good gamekeeper will not come (I mean appear) if you summon them with a hat of feathers, even if it means they will be shot, they just didn't go for that hat of feathers jazz.

of course I am almost drunk now, and fine, and I think reverence and adoration is horseshit, there is no man that I adore, or a chance that I will; there are men that I would want to drink beer with, there are women I would want to fuck, that is as far as my love goes, we are contaminated by nearness. I say I love this child that has been on my lap but if I say this it also means that I do not love some child that I cannot see because if I can't see her she surely does not exist, and although only what exists is that which is near us or what we can see - it traps us into error - like murder, war, the 8 or 12 hour job, the house, the flag, the love of the greasy tablecloth that we puked upon just last night, it is certainly logical to seek for the things which make us happy and safe and drunk and immortal and christlike and come crazy but we are all banging heads to satisfy the teeth of our own souls - anarchists, rightists, leftists, religionists, judo practitioners, horseplayers, drunks, chess players, all, all, ... lost in the tilting glob of self, what the hell can we do? I have often thought that much more than suicide that MADNESS was the answer! think the sweetness! battering against rubber walls, screaming great poems and Nobody hearing! cold showers when you don't want them, WATER? WATER, WATER!! wires jammed into the-back of your neck jammed with electric shock, the TRUTH AT LAST: YOU DID NOT FIT, you are therefore crazy because we as members of society have practiced

various standard devices that make us safe and you unsafe, nobody takes his pecker out in a stadium of 90,000 people and shouts SHIT ON AMERICA! that man must be crazy, he's been treated so good, what the hell does he want? we can live without protest, what's all this *protest* SHIT? so he lost his job? so he's worried about the bomb? so he writes madrigals on the sleeves of his dirty shirts? some PANSY who wants GOOD? real men don't fuck with good; real men are tough; real men can take it, the stockpiles of bombs don't bother us, shit, we got more an' they got, and we'll figure a way to handle those chinks. Remember Teddy R.? a big stick and a soft voice. I mean, Blaz, I am ready to go crazy not because I think the good guys are not winning but because the good boys are almost the same as the bad boys, I mean it's jazz and waste and holler, and all this expenditure and not even a young Portuguese girl say 19 licking my cock with her sandpaper tongue while whilst I lay back upon a mass of blue pillows while the VULTURE winks.

your stuff about letters, your u putting out these letters I don't quite know about because men seem to lie in their letters as while well as in their poems, the only thing being that maybe the lies in the letters are the more relaxed lies, this helps, and of course, the letters the pomes are maybe the best of the sordid worst of us, but I keep thinking of everybody shitting and then getting up to wipe their asses, dabbing in the paper, holding it in the hand, looking tat the smear smears of brown and then the terds and the n flushing it away, looking at the swirl of guggling white anhi hi hoping tit high that it does not stuff up that the mackerel holy get it so we can eat it again and jam it down and out, hurrah. I give top shit advice so listen, I am one eight eighth of your heart, and I say, you';l get some good ones, the very worst and best of men come clean sometimes, but really, mostly, I guess as your finding out - you'll get flashes and flares, but mostly sandin the motor, crap, hackneyed, and it being loose will often be worse, and

so that's more hell, yet we are used to that, so I'd say (the voice from above) that you should try to pick the meat, the avocado, I mean EXCERPTS, baby, you read? sure you do, of course, like that ass C.C. would say, all my letters are good, but if you printed *all* my letters y'd probably make a fortune and I'm not quite ready to spill I mean spoil you yet.

the rats are drunk and the bluebells dance upon the top of WITHERED TITS.

not being shit, but I wish you could get hold of the 50 or 60 letters I wrote CORRINGTON, but doubt that he'll let you peek, do I guess right here? Willie all right, mostly more so once, but gone off on tangent of success and power, and maybe he's right, shit, I don't know, I don't know, we did not get on well in new Orleans in that room full of professors and laymen hymen lawyers and bigwigs, and I didn't say anything which was cowardly, but on the other hand, they didn't give me much a chance too, all that exposition of brilliance and nobody really wanting to get drunk. I just get the toothache of everywhere, these people sitting around matching wits and in the pocket brilliances ... I sometimes do think that I am XRA CRAZY because I am tired and do not seem to care, although actually I do care, and I remember Williams, Miller Williams was hard but kind and gave me a book of his poems, but even Jon gave me a tough time - holding things against me that I said and did while drunk, and I think this is amateur, and I keep thinking of the boys who did a lot of TIME up there and I keep thinking they haven't learned basics - the 8 or 9 whores I shacked with knew more about me drunk than Jon could understand, what good's the lockup if you come out like a little boy with a blackboard? you and Jon Webb and Louise Webb are the only living editors that I know in this world - yet if it comes to a break I will go elsewhere - and not be published. God, I guess I give a lot of shit and ask forgiveness, but I've

what? whet where am I?
the woman just came in and asked me to fk
readone
of her pomes, o.k. pome but title way off, I had to tell her
so, all right?

man, I can barely find the keys where was I?
woman came in and said we she was almost out a
cigarettes

I said go get some I'll watch the kid
and I pray that this is what keeps us from conquering
room

Rpm Rome I mean or not being a tetrander
I guess by now that you gather by now that I my my am
a nut case instead of the true inspirational 1/2 poet, but I do
not think that this bothers you, so far you are the only man
I can trust, and I do not mean some kind of fictional
handholding duress of gag ignomy, when you rot or I rot
roar, it will be time enough to let go, where was I???

o, yes -

a native American citizen must submit with his
application for transport: a birth certificate, or, if
such a certificate is is not obtainable, a bapistmal
certicite or a certified cop y of the record of
bastardism.

god, thanks for your invite to sleep u 1/2 on your rug
when the human beasts close in, but I cannot accept
mostly because I love yor wife and your children and
your walls, and also my love for you goes too deep to
allow myself to die prick thing or wounded dove
within your gentle hands, and now christ I've said
p5ickthing and now you think it's my prick between
your hands and that I am jiving you, god god I
mustn't drink so much exce t I want to, what I mean
to say, my sorrow nose a way to end get off the head

when it hurts enough, I got the secret, you know
what I mean.

look, don' ever send me money: I will take it
it's not lack of money keeps me from sending letters
shit written to me it's only that after reading the
letters I am scard scared that nobody has written to
me, it came as a kind of shcok I keep dying up and
down, dull-eyed sacroscant mar macarroni of self

I don't think anybody knows
and it is really very much like
being lockedin a closetful of
socks and wrinkled shirst
and hearing the breadman's whistel
at noon and no way to get out
to buy a taffy-roll or a green smock
full of warm woman bending over a cupcake
whileher husband dies in a Kansas City
electrodude of shock
and victory.

another free pome for your shithouse...
your furnish the paper and I'll furnish the

HA HA HA hahaha

rest,

baby.

what seems the cunt mock intonation of the gravity of my
sadness is not a play game it is eyow HEAVY

and I do not promise you suicide or anything that *must*
be cone snapped into turtle's mouth

done

only what I've got to do want feel now here hear hear you
cotton-stainer

long-haired squash bug ally in
pn pendulous necktie drifting

HOSUMMA!

I've run out of my children

(they keep playing Gustave Hotlz 'The Planets'
because of these space cocksuckers and I grow
very tired of bad music and plentiful timing)

I lost it.

look, don't worry about paper for *Asshole Insane
Enough to Live Between Breasts*, I am most happy that you
understood the manuscript but I can't write any novel I
think, unless I feel like it and I just don't feel like it and
maybe never will, and so here we go on being poor, novels
means dollars, and I still envision the smashed face not
giving in, stoking in the cigar, lighting it, saying fuck you,
and all excuses of later times if I even am around will call
me a homo a coward a fink a seller of cowardice, and who
knows? maybe I am all or any of hell these, yet I sometimes
think of those who make the decisions, I sometimes think of
what they are and where they are and I do not

feel so good

now Richard Wagner.

they stoked off Wagner and tossed him in the corner,
these laterists, an expelled jack off kid, and even an anti-
Wagner school, and he had certain ways, of grandeur of
malicious exploitation of sound but shit, don't they all?
every man who arrives upon the scene thinks he knows it
and most of them do, like Corrington, but they know too
god damned much, and what they missed was the fact that
Wagner had

MUSCLE

ENERGY

HEART

and the guts to fill 40,000 pigs,
80,000

or

human?

beings.

see Hon Jonathan Swift
see Schopenhauer
see Orpahn Anney.

I am going to close this letter while I am drunk and this
is the only way to do it otherwise we choose sides of
ourselves to see

I HOPE THAT YOUR PORCH STEPS HAVE SPLINTERS

I HOPE THAT YOUR BALLS ACHE WHEN THE MOON IS HIGH HIGH HIGH

I HOPE THAT THEY KILL THE FACTORIES
AND THE ALREADY DEAD

I HOPE THAT THEY KILL THEM SOMEMORE SO

THAT MY \$\$\$# EYES MAY SEE

MERCY

within them
within
me.

bathroom poem.

something about Jean's Journal, you were good man not
too attack too hard, cd. have told the bitch she shd have
named dog after her pussy.

I guess Stravinsky Pound
John Fante to be the best men
of our age
with the early Saroyan
even then lying to himself
but wide and lovely style of floating
yet to go down in the muck when the war began
WORLD WAR 2
he did not follow his dream and
he therefore died

and I am trying to pick up some of the strings from the best
of M91ton dante inferno big nose wax mustache death of
them all

somebody once took me into seeing this old and almost
famous poet and I did not want to go u know fuck u but I
got drunk enough and we went, the id kid with the scarf
around and and around his neck and me I went with some
whore some woman and the great poet finally leaned
forward and he said to me:

I THOUGH YOU WERE YOUNGER THAN YOU ARE.

and we watched his young boy who looked like a
woman

pa, play
the piano and he p.a played it good good
I got icehole asshole chills on t into the dark of me,
he was good
yet he was pitiful -
like a srouge a stranger trained to die a certain
way,
and his mother knew
as, I said goodbye
she said
he's so strange, he's so little man, I don't think
he's ever kissed a
girl.

don't worry, mama, I told her, your little boy is
beautiful, and goodnight, and I stole
one of there gentle little statutes of
pewter
and then gabe it very much back and
smiled

and they, Mr.Bukowski, I'm very sorry we do not
drin herem, but good to meet you we've

read your work
somewhere.

...look blaz not much good
list ning to Srav Strav
and trhing to fond i find
keys

I better leave
now.

if I could piss only be
the shadow of this
man's
giant.

I've got to wake up to that yellow ;pro mise of action and
I w n't certainly bd be ready.

think of the
breadmaan,
Buk

[To Steven Richmond]
July 23, 1965

[* * *] I am reading Celine, who is somebody else who
writes better than I do, and I find this *comforting*, I like to
be led along, I like somebody else to do THE DIRTY WORK, there
are so few people that I *can* read - Camus' *The Stranger*,
the early Sartre, the few poems of that homo Genet; Jeffers;
Auden before he got comfortable; the early Shapiro (and
then with a sense of distrust); Cummings when he didn't
get too *too* fucking cute; the early Spender -

'the living or the dying,
this man's dead life or

that man's life
dying.'

Patchen's got a little too much sugar for me, too much melodramatic bravado which makes me feel as if I had been crying in a movie house, but I find his drawings innocent and lovely and they continue to appear that way to my eye at this stage.

Of course, the Dickey boys, Allen Tate, the whole South Kenyon Sewanee snob cocksuckers of the blood of Life, they write so very well, and they are real bastards, they know the game, it's a power game, and they know the language and the history, but they are truly a bad people, the worst people of all in the worst game of all: conning men out of their souls. Last March in New Orleans I met a couple of Southern profs who had once been men and I could see that they were gone, and didn't speak, or that is, they spoke, one had acquired a whole new line of degrees, had gone to England and written a batch of research on James Joyce (but history will find, I say, that he wrote only one decent book: *Finnegans Wake*), and this boy had even been given a grant to do this, and the other one had been given a grant too and he went somewhere and translated somebody in South America (hell! vallejo again? or the other one? can't think, can't think), and one had a fine red beard and the other a beret and they shouted across the room arguing various things of university power - degrees, control of magazines, publication credits, all that shit, my god, jesus, all that shit, and there was some lawyer who had come over to the Quarter and this lawyer collected John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Y. Winters, the mess, and I thought sure they would all leap together in the center of the room and kiss and ream and kiss and feel each other's balls if they had any, yet, in a sense, I was hurt, let's admit it: they did not admit the reality of my existence and soon

forgot me. I should have known because I have been cooled all my life - beginning with my 2 bugged-up parents and down through the schoolyards and into the alleys with the winos and down through the women and the years and the living I was either always something to laugh at or forget, which was all right with me, I almost liked it, and still almost do, being alone, being alone here now with the girlchild screaming and the woman flushing the toilet... [* * *]

Blaz fucked-up again - this time not strike but something worse, I can't tell you; maybe he will, and it's really none of my horse, but I keep thinking that he is the Great Romantic Caught in the Spider Dream, and worse yet the kid has got to begun believing that I am some source of wisdom or Life-long Kool, you know, and I think he expected me to o.k. his latest, but Christ, I can't walk a straight line most of the time myself, and if I had to straight-talk him I'd say 2 things at the same time:

a) take what you want, take what's good for you, take what keeps you alive

b) but don't kill anybody ever in the process in this process who has ever loved you depended on you or saved *your* life.

if you take a without b you don't make it and whatever you take will kill you because you are as phoney as that which you wish to overthrow, the weakest men take that which seems immediately better; the strongest men hurt themselves (if hurt has to be), and wait. I'd never say this if I were sober, of course, but I'm seldom sober, of course. [* * *]

[To Jim Roman]
July 23, 1965

I really believe that *Cold Dogs* will be issued [* * *]

No, I didn't see Jonathan Williams when he hit town. I have a reputation as a vicious and nasty drunk (not entirely unfounded) and somebody gave him the word prob, when he asked. That's all right. [* * *]

oh yes, Stuart hung with 3100 copies of *Crucifix* but he'll unload and at \$7.50 too, now I am fairly high on beer, typing this in the kitchen while the woman and the ten month old girl sit in the front room listening to Russian poetry on the FM radio. I can't listen because almost all poetry is bad for me; it irritates; me makes me twitch and have spasms. I don't understand it, I feel as if I were being reamed in a pig pen. [* * *]

p.s. Finally reading Celine and it's about time. A master, no doubt of it.

[To Jon and Louise Webb]

July 26, 1965

[* * *] Did Corrington show before you left town? if so, I think we gotta give him points. I think I have g.d. been too hard on too many people, to hell with KNOCK CORRINGTON, to hell with KNOCK SHERMAN, this is small and I am sick of myself. I can disagree with some of their principles and ways and maneuverings, but, hell, no man knows when he is right and when he starts thinking he is always right and that the universe is his apple, then he might as well either start a whorehouse or become a preacher, he's got rocks. [* * *] I am still growing up and I'm very much afraid that when I reach full size that I will be dead.

Marina keeps yanking at me and I lift her up and she sits here in her yellow pajamas

banging at the typewriter

grabbing for my cigar and beer
tiny hand sea-blue eyes
she thinks me a monster of heroic proportions,
my god such a sweet DOLL!!!
she breaks me and breaks me up again and again
as I peer at her out of my
evil face.

the faucet drips, and on and on I write, it's so easy when drunk, the poems are flowing again, poems, poems, and good or bad they may be, I am now easier to live with, I'd suppose, those 2 books, they almost froze me. It's like somebody wrote me, 'Well, you might as well kill yourself now and go out clean.' I know what he means, but what about Marina? I think she likes me very much, she does seem to, so suppose I left now? a dirty trick I'd think, you should see her eyes, what eyes what eyes what eyes!!! [* * *]

look here, if Henry Miller liked *Crucifix* that's good enough for me, that's the best critic there is - a man who has lived that hard that long just can't learn to lie and also has no need to. Christ, Jon and Lou, isn't life *really* strange??? that a man like Henry Miller would be speaking about all of us? we are truly lucky, we are in touch with the gods, and I am happy for us all, god damn, that was a *good* phone call, you LIFTED ME RIGHT UP WITH YOUR HAPPINESS and that is why I keep drinking and write on and on. Frances has fixed me something to eat but I keep saying no no, I am busy, to hell with food! oh shit, everything is so strange; it's so good to know the good people, but do you know what else??? we must be wary, we must be careful, we must follow our own guts ... or else the poems will quit, we will quit and we will forget where we are, look, the world is still, I think (so far), a very horrible place filled with horrible people (am I snitching?) (I keep opening beers and drinking them and lighting cigars like a madman), look, look, it's only next