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FROM INNOCENCE TO EXPERIENCE: A STUDY OF HERZOG

> The revolutions of the twentieth century, the limitation of the masses by production, created private life but gave nothing to fill it with. This was where such as he came in. The progress of civilization—indeed the survival of civilization—depended on the successes of Moses E. Herzog (125).[1]

In this way the hero of Bellow's latest novel acquires an importance beyond the purely private, hoping to become, in his dealings with his environment, a leader out of the Wasteland. Like his Biblical namesake, Moses manages to lead the way from bondage to the very borders of the promised land.

The plot of *Herzog* traces the development of an individual from the state of innocence to that of experience (the recurrent nursery rhyme "I love little pussy, her coat is so warm" is reminiscent of Blake); it is the task of the critic to trace this mental development to that state that gives rise to Herzog's final resolution to send no more messages. The task is not an easy one. If, as Edvig assures Herzog, neuroses are measured by the inability to tolerate ambiguous situations (304), surely the reader's mental health is well tested by the novel. "Allow me modestly to claim that I am now much better at ambiguities" (304), Herzog writes, and as he becomes more tolerant of ambiguous situations so must we; they are part of the state of experience which Herzog's consciousness, the world of the novel, comes to acknowledge. The final result is a re-assertion of our recognition that nothing in Bellow's world is separate, clear-cut, easily distinguishable. Although initially it seems to Herzog that the world operates on such clearly defined principles, he gradually recognizes the highly complex implications of—

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[1]All page references are included in the text. I have used the Viking edition of *Herzog, Henderson the Rain King, The Adventures of Augie March,* the Vanguard edition of *The Victim,* the Meridian Fiction edition of *Dangling Man,* and the Popular Library edition of *Seize The Day.*

> Well, for instance, what it means to be a man. In a city. In a century. In transition. In a mass. Transformed by science. Under organized power. Subject to tremendous controls. In a condition caused by mechanization. After the late failure of radical hopes. . . .(201)

This is the problem that Herzog has to deal with; the critic, in selecting any one of the "final multiplicity of facts" (325) in the Bellow world, perverts it as he strains under the practical impossibility of including them all. For Herzog's struggle can be seen as being primarily one of the character as victim of his own peculiarities, of the man subject to single oppressors, of the individual against the mass, of justice against injustice, of the heart against the head, of the romantic against the realistic, or ultimately of life against death.

But Herzog's conflict is, in all areas, that of freedom against slavery, whether it is bondage to his own idiosyncracies, his female acquaintances, or the social demand for justice, "reality", and death to the individual. The consideration is one of determining or being determined. Herzog shares the passivity and suffering of earlier Bellow heroes trying to find a livable compromise with their environment. Following Joseph's unsuccessful attempt at complete self-sufficiency, his heirs have attempted various degrees of dependence on the regimentation he so highly praises in the concluding paragraph; Moses is no exception.

The most serious threats to Herzog's self-determination are the reality instructors, who dominate his growth, trying to force him to accept their solution to the contemporary situation. These are the Wastelanders, the death seekers, the self-appointed destroyers of illusions who compulsively educate the "throb-hearted", the "potato lover", the gullible, the victim. They are recognizable through all of Bellow's work: Allbee becomes Leventhal's own guardian reality instructor; Augie March is harassed by them; "you know you're going to ruin yourself ignoring the reality principle and trying to cheer up the dirty scene" (435). The climax of *Herzog* lies in the hero's rejection of the teachings and methods of the reality instructors, and we are, up to the point of Moses' discovery of Gersbach bathing his daughter, uncertain of the decision he will make, whether he will give in to the forces pressing upon him. After this point, the movement is away from their doctrine, for here he realizes that what the reality instructors call "reality" is illusion.

Herzog's seduction by the reality instructors is centrally involved in the issue of justice, of life and death, and is the scene of action for the bulk of the novel. Ranged against him Moses finds "Sandor Himmelstein, Valentine Gersbach, Madeleine P. Herzog, Moses himself. Reality Instructors. They

want to teach you—to punish you with—the lessons of the Real" (125). Sandor advises, "You must cleanse the gates of vision by self-knowledge, by experience" (86). One's reward? "You'll be glad to think of your death then. You'll step into your coffin as if it were a new sports car" (291). At one point Moses sees his misfortunes "as a collective project (Madeleine, Sandor, et cetera), himself participating, to destroy his vanity and his pretensions to a personal life so that he might disintegrate and suffer and hate . . . next door to the Void" (93). From the beginning of the novel we are aware of Herzog's incipient adoption of the proposed viewpoint. As he contemplates his reflection in the water at Martha's Vineyard he wishes "If only his soul could cast a reflection so brilliant and so intensely sweet. . . . But that would be too childish. The actual sphere is not like that, but turbulent, angry. A vast human action is going on. Death watches" (91).

As he is tempted by the Wasteland doctrine, Herzog follows the technique approved by its initiators, Hegel and Heidegger, a method of awareness through personal memories and collective history: "GWF Hegel (1770-1831) understood the essence of human life to be derived from history. History, memory—that is what makes us human, that, and our knowledge of death: 'by man came death'. For knowledge of death makes us wish to extend our lives at the expense of others" (162). Moses remembers the gullible emotionalism of his father, who also had reality instructors to set him right: " 'They'll take what they like from you, those *leite'*, said Zipporah. 'Now isn't it time you used your head?' " (146). And Moses remembers his mother's less offensive role: " 'Could you give a blow on the head?' Here Mother Herzog seemed to agree" (145). In her dealings with Moses, his mother takes the part of a reluctant reality instructor, who had allowed the child Moses to choose "not to read the text" (234). But as he becomes increasingly aware of the injustices that are thrust upon him, he reviews her death and learns the lesson. The dust she shows him is the humanity for which he searches (233), seeming to corroborate the belief that Death is God.

The initial Herzog is his own masochistic reality instructor simply because of his high sensitivity and passion, his heart-throbbing nature. Henderson and Augie March are his predecessors; Thea says to Augie, " 'Oh you screwball! You get human affection mixed up with everything, like a savage. Keep your silly feelings to yourself' " (347).

An omnipresent threat to the freedom of the throb-hearted is potato love. "low-grade, universal potato love" (66). In his education under the reality instructors, Moses comes to see potato love as a glossing over of unpleasant

facts, often a dangerous betrayal into the hands of the enemy. It is not the stuff which rules the world: "'Do not deceive yourself, dear Moses Elkanah, with childish jingles and Mother Goose. Hearts quaking with cheap and feeble charity or oozing potato love have not written history'" (77). Potato love is passionate, involuntary, and indiscriminate. It responds to humanity and expects return in kind: "All he wants is everybody should love him" (261). One can feel it even toward the reality instructors who scorn and disdain it:

> He gave Moses a kiss. Moses felt the potato love. Amorphous, swelling, hungry, indiscriminate, cowardly potato love.
>
> "Oh, you sucker". Moses cried to himself in the train. "Sucker." (91).

The victim of potato love quickly becomes the victim of the objects of his love: "'I left you money for an emergency. You turned it all over to Madeleine to buy clothes. Were you her lawyer or mine?'" (91).

As he becomes increasingly aware of the facts he formerly ignored, Moses recognizes his former condition as one cut off from unpleasant and disturbing factors, analogous to the supervised rest which he rejects at the end of the novel. The reality instructors, "Simkin, for instance, or Himmelstein, or Dr. Edvig, believed that in a way Herzog was rather simple, that his humane feelings were childish. That he had been spared the destruction of certain sentiments as the pet goose is spared the axe" (231). Formerly Herzog's life had been one of "meekness in exchange for preferential treatment" (154). His initial outlook on life, the tender loving care which he gave and expected, becomes concentrated for him into one short nursery rhyme: "I love little pussy her coat is so warm, and if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm, which represents the childish side of the same creed, from which men are wickedly awakened, and then become snarling realists" (191). That is, Herzog learns no longer to expect justice.

A central problem in the novel then, and in all of Bellow's work, is the contrast of the expectation of justice to the actual fact. The plea of the Bellow hero, victimized by others, is for justice at almost any cost. Leventhal consistently demands justification from Williston and Harkavy, as Allbee demands justice of him; Tommy Wilhelm constantly tries to present his side of the case, and Henderson appeals to Romilayu for an assertion of metaphysical justice: "Isn't it promised?Romilayu, I suppose I mean the reason—the reason. It may be postponed until the last breath. But there is justice. I believe there is justice and that much is promised" (328). The earlier heroes, Wilhelm and Leventhal, are concerned with justice in human terms, and are, at the end of the novels, disappointed in it. Herzog goes beyond realizing that justice on

the human level is impossible to consider the implications of this knowledge. It is therefore not inappropriate to say that, while *Seize the Day* and *The Victim* present mainly the problem, *Herzog* avoids the contrived conclusions of these two by giving the development of a solution as well (in *Henderson* we feel that the problem is not posed in depth, or with personal intensity).

The appeal for justice on the human level is necessarily a relinquishing of self-determination, because it is a demand for a verdict from an outside source. Thus, Herzog's conversations and letter writing are a problem not only of justice, but of freedom. Herzog's first letters, and his conversations up to the turning point in the novel, correspond to Wilhelm's whining and Leventhal's begging for approval. Outraged, he pleads for a hearing from the convicting jury, asking for help, sympathy, understanding, and justification: "I want you to know, Monsignor, that I am not writing with the purpose of exposing Madeleine, or to attack you. Herzog tore up the letter. Untrue!" (155). Similarly, his visit to the doctor Emmerich is interrupted by his sudden realization that he came to accuse Madeleine (14). In the letter to Aunt Zelda, and the interview which it counterpoints (34-41), Moses accuses her and Madeleine of a conspiracy against him—was Uncle Herman part of it too? During his visit with Himmelstein, Herzog unsuccessfully resolves not to play the role of the victim: "I'm not going to be a victim. I hate the victim bit" (82)—but continues to do so. We anticipate a similar display of emotion with Libbie "to bother and pester poor Libbie, and exploit her affections" (94), but the train ride, spent in self appraisal, gives Moses the strength to resist exploiting her sympathetic understanding. However, Moses returns only to fall prey to a far more sympathetic audience still, Ramona. Just as the letters "have him in their power" (11), the revengeful conversations begin "against his will", Herzog "like an addict struggling to kick the habit" (156). "Then in the midst of it the realization would come over him that he had no right to tell, to inflict it, that his craving for confirmation, for help, for justification, was useless. Worse, it was unclean" (157). The recognition of his bondage yet the inability to break away from it makes Moses' dependence seem intense, and his final victory over it miraculous, for the realization of the pattern of conversations with Ramona and his wish to escape from it do not prevent him from succumbing to it during their first meeting in the novel. However, Herzog's temporary subjection to Ramona becomes primarily sexual servitude.

In *Herzog* sex takes the place that money takes in many of the previous novels; an enslaving exchange, it tends to bind the recipient; through it his dignity may be proved, and yet, in an ambiguous manner, his freedom is often

lost. Where Joseph's brother Amos, Simon March, and Shura Herzog all owe servitude to money, neglecting warmth and personal feeling, Moses' bondages are to different personal and social pressures. His financial concerns, although a contributing factor in the breakdown of his marriage, are not paramount in his considerations after it, and he keeps perspective concerning it in the face of the more immanent problem of retaining freedom from sexual slavery.

Ramona's way of life is a tempting alternative to Moses' mental turmoil: she is "a sort of sexual professional (or priestess)" (17), and the acceptance of her favours might, Herzog realizes from the beginning, mean payment "with his freedom" (18), as was the case with Madeleine: "I haven't been really independent. I find I've been working for others, for a number of ladies" (189). Since Ramona is a means by which he can find only a temporary remission of his suffering, "a favorable balance of disorderly emotions" (207), Herzog's desire for a resolution of his problems by sexual sublimation is an impossibility. Frustrated in his demand for external justice and internal self-control, Herzog's sole successful field of endeavour becomes the sexual: "Apes in their own habitat", he later notes, "are less sexually driven than those in captivity" (320), and even at the time of his momentary subjection to Ramona, he realizes that the sexual merely "*looks* like a resolution and an answer to many 'higher' problems" (208). The marriage that he contemplates, a surrender to Ramona's way of life, would mean an evasion of the search for an explanation; it would make self-sufficiency impossible because it would be a literal embracing of her on her own terms: "'Rousseau, Kant and Hegel' had him stopped cold. What if he should actually become a florist?" (203). The sexual is continually equated with the floral; Ramona's life revolves around the cultivation of the plant.

The sexual theme merges with that of justice when we consider the sexual connotations of the word "pussy". Madeleine's rejection of Herzog for a man with a wooden leg seems to him evidence of his failing virility, corroborated by his fast-disappearing hair. His concern with "death" thus also involves the Elizabethan meaning of the word, and the innocent attitude conveyed by the nursery rhyme initially concentrates, for Moses, on the expectation of sexual justice.

But Herzog moves beyond this demand for justice in limited sexual terms to a wider consciousness of the universality of the victim's condition. The suffering which remains unavenged, and death, the final injustice, both become central themes in his letters. Writing to Dr. Bhave, he advises, "You must start with injustices that are obvious to everybody, not with big historical

perspectives. Recently I saw Pather Panchali. . . . Two things affected me greatly—the old crone . . . going into the weeds to die . . . the death of the young girl in the rains" (48). In a manner reminiscent of Tommy Wilhelm's final revelation, Herzog deeply responds to other deaths, identifies his own daughter with the one he has seen, and remembers that his mother too had been a poor woman. Herzog's own outraged cry for justice contrasts ironically with the collective injustices of the past and present: "People by the billions and for ages sweated, gypped, enslaved, suffocated, bled to death, buried with no more justice than cattle. But Moses E. Herzog, at the top of his lungs, bellowing with pain and anger, has to have justice. It's his quid pro quo, in return for all he has suppressed, his right as an Innocent Party. I love little pussy her coat is so warm . . ." (220).

By continual consideration of these past and present injustices, the act of personal retribution which he plans to perform becomes symbolic in his mind of a universal setting aright of the chaos of human (or inhuman) affairs. Because it seems to him unjust that a young girl should die in the rains, that millions of Jews should die in concentration camps, that multitudes should die in an impersonal war, that mothers should die in poverty neglected by their sons, that fathers should be betrayed by Voplonskys and Lazanskys, he will use the weapon that his father and others should have used. The miserable, bleeding, starving scrap of humanity beaten to death by its demented mother becomes a symbol of the human condition; appalled by the machinery of civil justice, enraged by his frustrated helplessness, Herzog attempts to "obtain something for the murdered child" (240), but must give in to the loathsome reality, to the reality instructors, to death. Moses' reaction is all the reality instructors would have wished, his hatred is as intense as his love had been—"Excited, characteristic love turning to evil" (232). "And what was there in modern, post . . . post-Christian America to pray for? Justice—justice and mercy? And pray away the monstrousness of life, the wicked dream it was? He opened his mouth. . . . The child screamed . . ." (240). The identification of Herzog and collective humanity with the child is complete with this scream. He connects Madeleine and Gersbach with the murderers, a killing both of himself ("Another divorce . . . it feels like death" [81]) and of his daughter. "They deserved to die" (254). "In spirit she was his murderess and therefore he was turned loose, could shoot or choke without remorse. He felt . . . an orgiastic rapture of inflicting death" (255). The illusions of an innocent mind have, under the tutelage of the reality instructors, been replaced by equally fantastic fictions; taught by those whose claim is faithfulness to reality, Herzog

has strayed far from the actual: "As soon as Herzog saw the actual person giving an actual bath, the reality of it, . . . his intended violence turned into *theatre*" (258). There is no fitter metaphor for the world of make-believe.

Herzog's discussion with Asphalter is the articulation of the thoughts which caused him to abandon revenge. Asphalter, Herzog's foil, overcome by intensity of emotion when he too is deprived of the object of his love, is following the treatment prescribed by the reality instructors—preparation for death: " 'Reality, not illusions. Truth not lies. It's over'. 'Face death. That's Heidegger. What comes out of this?' " (270). The result is a world of fantasy even more unreal than Herzog's illusions have been: Asphalter sees buttocks descending fireladders, burlesque girls playing baseball. Herzog now realizes that for the reality seeker "the truth turns him and runs away and hides before he's even done speaking" (271).

Herzog, here in a state of "simple, free, intense realization" (265), formulates his rejection of the *modus vivendi* of the reality instructors. No longer fighting his responsive heart, Herzog's next consideration is what to do with it, and from this point the novel is one of constructive growth. The heart has its rightful place hereafter, and the recognition by June of her father, whom Himmelstein had predicted she would forget, reinforces Herzog's rejection of the "realism" of the Sandors. He takes stock:

> He had set himself up with his emotional goodies—truth, friendship, devotion to children (the regular American worship of kids) and potato love. So much we know now. But this—even this—is not the whole story either. It only begins to approach the state of true consciousness. . . . Go through what is comprehensible and you conclude that only the incomprehensible gives any light (266).

In the remainder of the novel Herzog seeks to apprehend that which by definition he cannot comprehend, the incomprehensible which he feels in his heart.

He now knows definitely that that thing is not death, "No, far from it" (266). It is clear to him at this point that the reality instructors follow Tina Zokoly's death exercises in order to achieve objectivity in personal relations and avoid the suffering inevitable in emotional involvement. "God is no more. But death is" (271) they say: "look for truth in grotesque combinations" (271).

As his perception into the defects of the Wasteland-reality outlook deepens, Herzog realizes that it is, in origin, a question of justice and of personal freedom: "At the bottom of the whole disaster lies the human being's

sense of grievance, and with this I want nothing more to do. It's easier not to exist altogether than accuse God. Far more simple. Cleaner" (290). His contemporaries have moved beyond faith in God, but have not eradicated the sense of betrayed disappointment resulting from the contrast between their former expectations of considerate care, and the dominant opinion of "reality". It is a cosmic case of "I love little pussy her coat is so warm, and if I don't hurt her she'll do me no harm"; historical development from this kind of childish religious attitude has as yet only reached the "snarling realism" (191) of the worshippers of Death. As Herzog notes (316), we are dominated by extremes.

Moses rejects this sense of grievance and yet allows the possibility of the existence of justice, not in human terms, but in the metaphysical sense: "Spared by these clumsy police guardians (the human equivalent) you get one last chance to know justice. Truth" (303). By this time it is clear to Herzog that he must not search for answers from without (he will only be victimized by a perversion of the actual) but from within (this does not mean, however, that he must cut off external contacts). The solution to the contemporary social situation, like the solution to Herzog's own search for identity (the latter is a microcosm of the former), must come from the individual, so that it is originally a search for self, a definition of humanity. "Eisenhower's report on National Aims, if I had anything to do with it, would have pondered the private and inward existence of Americans first of all" (165). The suffering condition is collective, but the solution must be individual through the difficult discovery of selfhood in a society that makes the self negligible.

The search for this self is Herzog's motivating power from the beginning; even at Martha's Vineyard he talks of "this great-bone-breaking burden of selfhood and self-development" (92-93). He is continually harassed by an indefinable longing which is the essence of his humanity, which provides the definition of the human and therefore of the self. "Who is this creature? It considers itself human. But what is it? Not human of itself. But has the longing to be human. And like a troubling dream, a persistent vapor. A desire. Where does it all come from? And what is it? And what can it be!" (220). Henderson's "I want" and Augie's search for the axial lines are being presented again, and, as with these two heroes, the longing is for a time completely quieted in the final pages of the novel. The Herzog of these final pages is first of all anti-doctrinal: "A curious result of the increase of historical consciousness is that people think explanation is a necessity of survival" (322). The explained life is unbearable, for it depends on "strange notions, hallucinations, projections" (322). En route to the same conclusion, Joseph said almost

twenty years earlier: "I could name hundreds of these ideal constructions, each with its assertions and symbols, each finding—in conduct, in God, in art, in money—its particular answer, and each proclaiming 'This is the only possible way to meet chaos'" (140). Joseph's career, however, ends in the outward surrender to one of these systems. Moses' conclusion is a solution rather than a surrender because it is an assertion of the personal rather than the socially systematized. However, Moses' final self-sufficient state is not one of avoidance of former or potential threats to his independence; potato love, Ramona, injustices, and death are there without the "supervised rest" or Tante Taube's evasion of responsibility.

Herzog's inability to answer Rousseau's statement "Je sens mon cœur et je connais les hommes" (129) is a clue to the quality that he finally re-asserts above all, open-hearted acceptance of feeling-filled response. While under the influence of the reality instructors, Moses seemed to himself an anachronism, "infected by Old World feelings, like Love, Filial Emotion, old stuporous dreams" (286), an archaic type which "belongs to the agricultural or pastoral stages" (265). But Herzog's refusal to use the gun is an assertion of his father's way of life, and that of his forefathers: "Ancient Herzogs would never have touched the revolver" (265). So Herzog continues as "a real genuine old Jewish type that digs the emotions" (84), and continually re-affirms his "throb-hearted character" in his last letters. "I want to send you and others the most loving wish I have in my heart. This is the only way I have to reach out—out where it is incomprehensible. I can only pray toward it. So . . . . . Peace!" (326). The incomprehensible then is apprehended by the heart, the loving wish. "Must play the instrument I've got", he says (330). ("Lots of old instruments like this kicking around", adds Will). But, non-committal and all-inclusive, Herzog refuses to call his instrument superior to others: "Some hearts put out more love and some less of it, presumably. Does it signify anything? There are those who say this product of hearts is knowledge. 'Je sens mon cœur et je connais les hommes'. But his mind detached itself also from its French. I couldn't say that for sure" (340). Moses has no arguments to make about it, no commandments to give, no messages to write. The simple fact of the feeling, "'Thou movest me'", the responsiveness, is happiness and the satisfaction of desires. Even death is accepted in the scheme of inevitable change: "I am pretty well satisfied to be, to be just as it is willed and for as long as I remain in occupancy" (340).

Herzog's final state includes the floral or the sexual as well; Bellow prepares us for the final appearance of Ramona by Moses' revived interest in

the floral. Moses rejoices when he find the rose in the bathroom (where he used to make love to Madeleine) "as shapely, as red (as nearly 'genital' to his imagination) as ever" (311). But Moses is not dominated by Ramona and the sexual: "I'm not being left in anybody's hands", he assures Will; the flowers which he gathers for his dinner with Ramona (roses and day-lilies) he keeps: "no, they couldn't be turned against him. So he did not throw them away". Herzog's final self-satisfaction is an affirmation of life, involving the human contacts which Joseph rejected, yet strong enough not to fear betrayal by these contacts into servitude. He is at last free from slavery to sex, to letters, to demands for human justice, to reality instructors, and to death.

But Herzog's final philosophy is a largely agnostic, nebulous, totally private affirmation of the individual and of whatever is within his heart; it is difficult to discuss and impossible to emulate. The reader is tempted to cry "can't you give us something more definitely positive, Mr. Bellow?" This feeling no doubt arises from the universal attraction to the extremes, which Bellow thoughtfully discusses as he presents his conservative conclusion: "Mild or moderate truthfulness or accuracy seems to have no pull at all" (316), Herzog writes. In the face of this knowledge Bellow's moderation impresses us as, perhaps, a close approximation of the truth (or, if you will, reality as he sees it).

Herzog arouses potato love in the reader. Perhaps because of the large biographical element in the novel, Herzog, as a character, is more successful than any of Bellow's previous heroes. The reader's reaction to Joseph, Asa Leventhal, and Tommy Wilhelm is ambivalent and confusing, alternately impatient and understanding, because they so often stoop to the petty, attacking Vanaker in the bathroom (179), making it a point of honour to find a parking place. While he is temporarily a victim to peculiar idiosyncracies, Moses achieves an independence from them at the close of the novel. Although we admire Henderson and Augie March, our understanding of them, the statement of their problems, is obscured by distractingly spectacular adventures (it always comes as a slight surprise when we are told that yes, Augie March *does* have problems). Herzog combines the best of both strains with an intellectual articulation unique in Bellow's heroes, and his humour surpasses all, in such passages as "And next came his specific self, an apparition in the square mirror. How did he look? Oh, terrific—you look exquisite, Moses! Smashing! The primitive self-attachment of the human creature . . . ." (159).

Perhaps we owe the excellence of *Herzog* to Bellow's ability to maintain a certain balanced tension between his own objectivity (witness Moses' keen sense of the ridiculous), and his "primitive self-attachment". At points, however, we wonder whether the writing of the novel was not as compulsive to the author as the letter-writing is to Herzog; it is probable that Bellow was consistently in control of his material, aware even of the constant shifts from first to third person. But the doubt remains. "Believing . . . that the conquest of chaos need not begin anew every day. How I wish it! How I wish it were so! How Moses prayed for this!" (181-182).

SHOAL

Janet Lloyd

For twenty years at eight he closed the door
On emptied cup and shell and curlered wife
To board the bus at eight-o-five and take
His customary seat two from the front.
Sometimes he noticed that the leaves had turned;
Had gone, or were in bud, and felt surprise
That seasons slipped him by. But usually
His thoughts submerged to drift among the Munsters
And the panel shows; to nibble here a scene,
Or there a line. Sometimes his thoughts swam up
To hover at the pension plan, or dart
Aside from early death and I.B.M.

He surfaced at his stop. And yawning sank
Into the decimalled day of nine to five.