

IN SEARCH

Nigel Jenkins

Pleasure has a bed's start
over creation
in the long drinking halls,
polished, gleaming in dark places,
thrusting blind windows seaward.
Roll up! the Desperate, for
an evening's flight
at seven. There's fun from
eight-thirty for dabblers,
afraid-of-the-sea-at-night.
Roll up! to hear pint-sized
tragedies nightly unfurled
to folded ears; and laughter
eternal till midnight from fish-
mouths and gob-eyes.
Roll up! for the long, soft
halls of oblivion where
fancies are tickled, and beer
leaking from a friend's eye
may be mistaken for seas of sympathy;
where the manic joke carts
the drollest away;
where a lifetime's lie of give-and-take
grows roots for dotty strangers, or shrivels
for the freshly escaped.
Roll up! where boy
takes girl's hand to howl
from the curled root of his groin:
"All I want is a meaningless relationship!"
and she may giggle and grab
his overheated crutch.
Roll up! for the beeswax
drinking halls, their histories

long since fled, gone nomad
 with country spirits over
 fog-bound seas, though you may
 sense them at closing time
 if you brave the moon and
 marauding drunks, furious without
 bottle openers, scouring the bay
 for a perfect end.

ONLY THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS DARKLY

R. D. MacKenzie

To be or not to be,
 who is to say
 that is the question
 which faces the churches
 which faces the lawyers
 which faces the women,
 the woman in pain.

Where shall this zygote go,
 bucket or beddy-bye,
 that is the question
 which faces the pregnant,
 question:
 "to be or not to be"
 and the answer is seen
 only through a looking glass darkly.