

RITUAL OF THE LONG CRY

I met Donovan at the bar, stoned on booze and smoke,
Where his daily tirades held the room enthralled by
His inflamed agitations against any constraints.
He acted thoroughly surprised that each breath
That kept him alive curdled to confine him
In the ache of a creaking body of 49 years
That had been broken, diseased, and rolled as flab.
He could no longer love the body that his mother
Expelled and father exiled, as he inveighed against
The long cry of the first gulp until red in the face.
His cringes in anxiety in his wandering in the dusty
desert
Of the barroom, half held him up in the knowing
That he knew what he did not want to know
That seared his flesh in flashes to his soul, alerting her
As the unknown crier he'd heard from the day of his
birth.
He struggled to free himself from itching flesh,
Claws lacerated inner confines of flesh to escape its
cage.
What lived inside him held us in sway, and his
imaginings
Awoke an empathic ear of the fight with our common
plight.

He fought with foul curses, rank prayers, and spared no
one,
Absolutely no one, his bloody whipping spurs. We
took it.
Thinner than a dime, which he thought he deserved,
hope
In the spirits in the bottle exposed to him the travesty
of his birth.
He drank to be sober, to throw away the crutches of
sight
To see desperately what made him drink that left him
mad
Without sad refrains of disdain for us Lilliputians of his
soul travels.
With stumbles, but without a frown, he went on with
the ritual of his life.