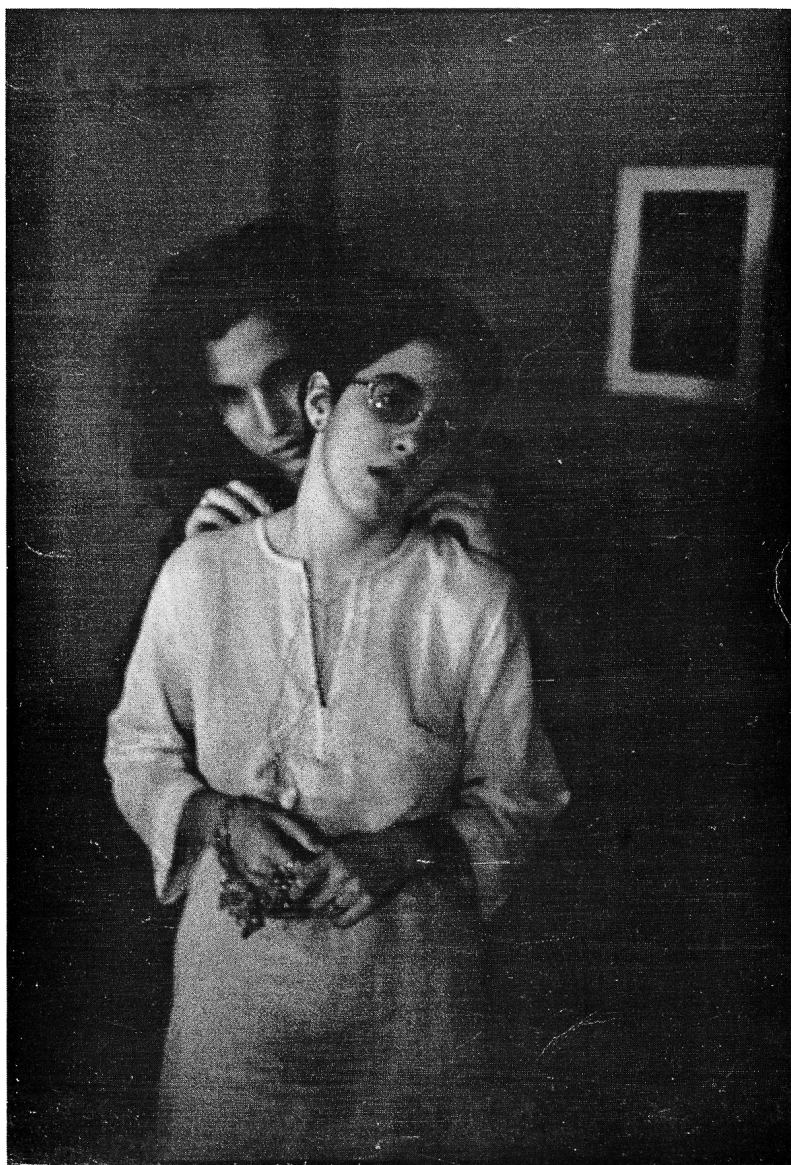


# THEORY



photograph  
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leonard neufeld

*Leonard Neufeld and Kathy Acker on the cover of Theory, by Leonard Neufeld, poetry book produced and distributed by the author, March 1972; staple binding, print of 100 signed by Neufeld. Black and white photograph: © Laurence (Larry) Fink.*

T H E O R Y

by

Leonard Neufeld

produced and distributed by the author

March 1972

if I don't get to know you how can i make proper use of you  
please allow me to serve you in any way i can  
let's walk down the street and talk about the people  
the idea being to clarify other extremes than our own  
no one will notice us until next month  
then we might be famous rich and/or powerful  
i'd like to move through life causing as little pain as possible  
you'd like to move through life causing as little pain as possible

\* \* \*

it's time to leave  
nobody's coming  
don't send money  
how can you dance at a time like this  
she said she has walls in her mind  
i believe her  
i believe in her  
i didn't want to come home  
they were a little piece of the old life  
i stayed away  
but she won't admit how she could feel

\* \* \*

he was on the inside looking out  
they were on the outside looking on  
life starts in a funny way  
he is as ephemeral as a rainbow  
he isn't subtle he's learning something

daddy isn't home, mommy's asleep, baby's crying  
the sound of a car door in the foggy night  
i will become one with the universe  
she rubbed his ass and giggled when he sucked her nipple

\* \* \*

step right in only 69¢  
let's fuck  
i really want to lick you  
do you mind  
how much  
where is it  
i didn't like it  
let's go  
i feel very bad  
there are demons in people's eyes  
this city is a national calamity  
an earthquake has struck  
the bus is melting  
my mouth is filled with slime  
only your flesh is clean  
i want to go home  
thank god you're safe  
everybody's so unhappy  
i broke down in the street and cried  
i saw reality  
it went bad  
i'll give up wanting to touch you if we can still talk to each other

\* \* \*

then i won't bother you anymore  
or then we'll work or eat lunch  
life is short  
the space between sleeping and waking is long  
life is long  
life goes on forever  
we must reverence life  
eat good food  
think kindly thoughts  
there are moments that will never disappear out of your mind

\* \* \*

i'm full of my dinner  
i'm on a voyage of discovery  
i'm talking to a mode of representation  
it costs a dollar to participate  
let's have a comment from a noncombatant  
i want to go home  
i want another drink  
i want to have a baby  
i want to compose myself  
i'm leaning over backwards  
she was attacked the instant she opened the door  
the floor is cluttered with poor sad ones  
the light stays on  
the money goes away anyway

\* \* \*

someone doesn't have anyone to talk to  
so he writes himself anonymous letters  
about the news of the day  
mistakes that have been made  
the paraphernalia of subsistence  
and hortatory remarks like  
cheer up  
every cloud has a silver lining  
things can only get better  
remember your tenth birthday party  
well, this makes no sense to me  
this seems like someone kidding himself  
this person is at the end of his rope  
no, it's a black black day

\* \* \*

i don't want power i want influence  
there's a right way to do things  
i couldn't have felt less like being picked up  
i couldn't have felt more like being picked up  
i could have felt like being picked up  
i could pick myself up  
the girl in red is trying to sell herself  
that's real nice of you  
i like you just the way you are  
i would do anything  
i would do anything  
let's strike a blow for freedom  
let's kill them with kindness  
let's immolate ourselves

let me kiss your feet  
i can imagine her vacant taste  
i can also overcome an initial disgust  
true love drove him crazy  
then he was on permanent welfare  
there was nothing to do  
there was nothing but a humane ideal  
i want to see taste touch and smell it  
they wait for you in the vestibule  
sometimes they just stick it into you without warning  
it's best to run first and be sorry later  
i'd like to meet a doctor  
i'd like to meet you at your place  
i'd like you to give me something  
i'd like to give it back to you  
i'd like to say goodbye and mean it  
i'd like to say hello to a friend  
i'd like to greet someone i hardly know  
i'd like to be able to share his sorrow  
i'd like to be able to think about it  
i'd like to feel it moving inside of me  
i'd like to give you a little piece of my heart  
that's why i bit you so hard  
and love to give you a private fuck

\* \* \*



don't scream, submit  
come alive look lively  
shape up  
get an arm-lock on reality  
there are no alternatives to bliss  
euphoria  
a rededicate life

\* \* \*

which way does the road go after it ends  
all roads lead to Rome  
there are no secluded spots along that road  
they are standing behind a pillar and sinning  
it's a question of bodies, numbers  
ten percent of a million is quite a lot  
sitting standing or lying down they all hear the same music  
i told him to ask his friends for help and it worked  
three people saved themselves through Christ  
evil is winning hands down  
they need a good meal - - salami and swiss cheese sandwiches  
free drinks  
if your throat is dry it means you're high  
a twelve turn maze can be memorized in two or three tries  
they thought they were making love  
only respectable people may swim here  
you can't walk away from it all  
it takes more than a little oil to fix a broken machine

\* \* \*

i like to work till i'm all through  
cleaning the house  
listening to a preacher  
or deciding which hat to wear  
this place isn't big enough for both of us  
everybody said to everybody else  
the question is who looks more like it  
the question is who looked like it first  
there's nothing else on the racks, she said  
to speak of them so familiarly  
i'd rather be on the rack in the privacy of my own bedroom  
than on the pillory in the middle of town  
nobody dares  
or everybody dares  
he's sad  
she's ridiculous  
let's laugh it up  
let's put down our tools and stand around  
let's let them know how we feel  
about the white slave traffic  
alcoholism, gambling, smoking, drug abuse  
zoos, prisons, asylums  
unauthorized raising of the dead  
ultra-violet filtration systems  
the ad-hoc committee to rule the world

\* \* \*

why am i standing on this line  
so i can get to the front of it  
how did this bottle of jam get into my hand  
lot's of people worked hard to make it happen  
he nodded and shrugged when i told him that nothing made  
sense  
he's my dear friend in the isolation ward  
i don't believe i'm any sicker than they are  
but they're afraid that what i've got is catching  
soon i'll hear the news  
then a report on the condition of the void  
i've never lost faith  
i'm the exact center of the universe

\* \* \*

i worry too much  
i can't seem to deal myself a winning hand  
i keep looking over her shoulder  
if all those contingencies work out i'd love to come see you  
if i could get in touch with my tormentor i'd break the bonds  
we could stay away for two whole days  
he sees that they're not all bad  
dirty faggot  
he's not all good  
he's so tired  
he's droopy and despondent  
he feels the opposite of jaded  
he's on the american routine  
i'd like to ride up to the north pole and squat  
she knows such wonderful people

i'm not strong enough for them  
the man is sitting in his office wherever he is  
he's got the fate of the world at his fingertips  
he won't answer any questions  
all he does is talk about food  
what he thinks about is doing right by his buddies  
we don't amount to much in his estimation

\* \* \*

this is no plot it's a romance  
i'll tell you the truth  
your life is completely empty  
see what i mean  
now you tell me something i don't know  
you'll keep me from hysteria and i'll keep you from being maudlin  
yes you will, you do  
and what's more you make me see the humorous side of life  
perhaps it's your silly presentation

\* \* \*

everything is going around in circles  
three months ago  
i took the little purple pill  
everything is going black, or blank  
the paper is tryings to tell me something  
in fact, everything is trying to tell me something  
i claim that it's fine weather for fine clothes  
there's no nonsense like you own nonsense

the wind is blowing in all directions  
which makes it hard to go uphill  
it's also hard to stand still  
all my pencils are sharp  
i'm ready, i'm ready  
question: how can you go in and come out simultaneously  
answer: through a door

\* \* \*

you hit him, because i'd really rather not  
i'd rather camp on her doorstep  
the car is coming around the corner  
the train cut off his foot  
they are the chimeras  
we didn't see it happen  
my food is staring at me and breathing  
this is my first hallucination  
i have beautiful mexican beads  
most people say they don't want to live forever  
and i don't blame them  
he'd like to build a barbed wire fence around her  
what i want to know is why

\* \* \*

when will we see you again  
the fat is in the fire  
the window curtains are burnt to a crisp  
the morning is hot and sticky  
he came to the end of him  
so he escaped  
actually, there are no revolutions  
except that fall follows summer, etcetera  
she said she'd been wrestling with herself  
i didn't notice  
older women still enjoy sex  
yes they do  
after this life, what?  
happiness, torment?  
this is the way to the refrigerator  
heavenly father  
i think i am constitutionally calm before a storm  
i did experience a catharsis  
people kill each other, it's natural  
his difficulties are your business  
you better find yourself and start to relate  
the movies are flashing across the screen  
what is it all about  
i have a conscience to guide me  
it's not hard to figure out who the good guys are  
they same the same things over and over  
still, they're not crazy

\* \* \*

my head is empty  
i want to talk to you about it  
love me  
like me  
kiss me  
touch me  
cook supper  
i'll make the bed  
let's go to bed  
don't get too close  
let's talk about something else  
did we get any mail today  
how are you feeling  
why don't you take better care of yourself  
believe me  
i'm tired  
i'm too tired  
maybe tomorrow  
don't cry  
poor baby  
it doesn't make any difference what i do  
people talked about me behind my back  
i'd fuck anyone  
no-one would fuck me  
i'd talk to anyone  
no-one could talk to me  
women have no inner resources  
i must be a woman  
go away  
don't look  
i'm not finished yet

\* \* \*

Here i am.  
Come alone.  
Be my baby.  
Let's eat fish.  
Be soft with me.  
I go to work.  
Nothing to do.  
Be brave.  
Be calm.  
I feel like crying.  
Hold me tight.  
Every night.

\* \* \*

i saw him from behind  
his long hair blowing in the wind  
and i said if he's got a mustache  
let's run him down  
i feel conspicuous  
i want to live with my own kind of people  
i want to be around people who feel the way i do  
i've had enough experience of other kinds of people to know i  
    need more  
i have to understand  
we seem to be in a particularly interesting mess  
at least i don't feel intimidated by these people who are burning  
    themselves out



i don't sense their lack of concern because i'm more dissipated  
than you are  
i'm still a masochist  
i don't pursue pain to see what i can learn from it  
i'd like to be above all that  
some people are infantile others are adolescent  
he just needs, he doesn't know about anything else  
i have enough for myself and to share a little with my friends but  
i don't have enough to share with my enemies

\* \* \*

i'm free enough to reach out in any direction and grab what i  
need  
i'm rich enough to eat out and see a movie every night  
i'm smart and sexy, have multiple skills, and can do anything i set  
my mind to  
i fuck a different beautiful woman every night and a different  
beautiful man every-other night (i'm basically heterosexual)  
i really do feel bad when i hear a friend is dying  
i'm sincerely trying to be of some use to my fellow creatures

\* \* \*

all tied up, tired out  
concerned with the larger issues  
an imputation of irresponsibility  
too much water in the rice  
a shortage of vegetables  
cockroaches

the way men run the world  
attention  
let's write down the rules  
it's illegal  
let's make that public  
you've forgotten it  
i still want to be in love  
i can't find my hand  
history can't be wrong  
lobotomy is the answer  
the question is  
may i take two giant steps  
aren't your eyes going away  
where are feelings  
why was i born  
who am i  
when is believing  
i don't have a bad taste in my mouth

\* \* \*

what do you want  
it takes so long  
it just takes so long  
everything happens  
nothing's changed  
everything's different  
i went for a walk  
and got lost in the stink  
she kissed me goodbye  
she offered them her last dime and a piece of cake

the last five minutes taught me a lesson  
it's like a little place in my mind that i can go to  
i'd like you to admire what i've done  
i'd like you to drop the hypocrisy  
i mean i'm a hypocrite  
or there's a brutal side to my nature  
or they better wake up and look around  
those people with eyes like wild animals  
they're so violent and unpredictable  
take my advice, get some sex  
i don't seem to make much of an impression  
then i look in the mirror a lot  
it certainly opened my eyes  
i'm going home  
there's lots to eat  
i just don't want to talk about it  
i just want to do it  
we like us  
he wants to go back to the war zone  
he wants to kiss her hand  
i can't get used to this ritual  
no, it won't be long

\* \* \*

untying a really complicated knot is a matter of dedication  
he doesn't want to go to his grandmother's funeral  
i don't make any concessions to principle  
he doesn't give himself away  
he'd like to have a simple normal friendship  
i wonder what happened to the argument we were having

i wonder why he didn't have an argument with her  
ha has a lot of respect for her  
she thought he was a little schleppey  
she thought she had a bizarre relationship to him  
i felt both guilty and angry  
it's nothing but petty jealousy  
i think there's a problem but i don't want to know about it  
he's playing god with his explanations  
he's just another person to everybody else  
i'm just another person to everybody else  
i explained her to her  
i explained her to herself  
i explained him to her  
i explained her to him  
i explained him to himself  
i got tired and went home to dream  
he thought "horror trip"  
he had a flat tire

\* \* \*

i am full of sentiment  
you only hurt the one you love  
consider the poor oppressed people  
they have disappeared  
there are no rulers  
no bankers  
no doctors  
no garbagemen  
no mailmen  
no policemen

i can't carry a tune  
my eyes are out of focus  
chairs are made to be sat in  
what is the opposite of a chair  
how can i avoid winning, by losing  
how can i avoid losing, by winning  
i sit at the table and stare at my mother  
she disappears, returns with a name  
meditation is the answer to all questions  
sweet dreams are the answers to insomnia  
i have no experience of despair

\* \* \*

when there's nothing then there's something  
she is a free agent  
she can fuck on a roof in the rain in the arms of another man  
bring her filthy clothing home covered with his hair  
talk to me about it  
talk to someone who professes to hate her  
put me in an untenable position in front of strangers  
wake me from a deep sleep by talking in my ear  
already i don't see myself in the mirror

\* \* \*

i'd like to rip off his energy and make it mine own  
because i keep forgetting what i'm thinking and feeling  
except that i haven't got the simplicity to do something beautiful  
in my heart i know i'm right, but i'm wrong

full of ugly little secrets the fantastic is no part of my life  
and this new continuity  
only clarifies an essential failure (central)  
i can flap my eyes and smile anytime  
it's good to know i've got a friend  
and my friends know they've got a friend  
or at least i hope they do (know it)  
but so does everybody (hope)  
it's not very beautiful for me to tell you this

\* \* \*

i'd like to know who's going to pay for this  
do i wear a button on my shirt  
do i do my duty  
do i have a highly developed sense of justice  
they meet in the arena of self-aggrandizement  
i guess i'm a bourgeois  
it brings me down  
i don't want saturday night to be a big sigh  
you're so heavy  
if you don't get paid you're not working  
it's part of the agreement  
maybe we can just have dinner and take it from there  
but it i don't know anybody else i'd much rather just talk to her  
but she says she can't meet anybody if she's with me  
which is probably true  
so we'll start out everywhere together and then go off on our own  
runs  
it's just that if i leave with you i'd like to feel certain of coming  
home with you

just don't come near me in between  
forget it  
you keep talking to me like i was two years old  
well, i have to promise not to be morbid  
i promise not to be morbid  
i'm rarely morbid  
i just prefer being introduced to people  
if you get my meaning

\* \* \*

he needs to revitalize his spirit  
he perceives the passage of time  
a flower opening in time-lapse photography  
death is nigh  
i am high  
starvation is a bring-down  
he needs to get off that train of thought  
i want to become one with him before it's too late  
imagine the space behind your head  
if i were blind would you care for me  
would you acknowledge me in another body  
will you come away with me to fairyland  
it's not easy to be alive  
other people believe in suffering  
the manly art of self-defense  
to commit suicide by running against a wall  
when the horns blow it's time to go  
when a bullet enters the body we love it up  
dancing in a mirror in a dream  
the wind is indifferent to the direction of the street

a sunshower makes me gasp  
then there's a rainbow  
how sweet in my heart  
sweetheart  
i want to be somewhere with you away from this place  
like a plateau between mountains  
i think it would be lovely  
ah serenity

\* \* \*

the house is filthy  
the nose is full of snot  
the cock is empty of sperm  
i'll wash the bathtub  
scrub the kitchen  
sweep the livingroom floor  
and hold onto my money  
i wish i could sing  
i mean, really open up my voice  
i don't want to be drunk  
everybody needs to be admired  
or to be with people who make one feel good  
a good laugh is always possible  
such desires are like ships passing in the night

\* \* \*

i can't go on much longer  
i feel more and more isolated  
my friends, they left without saying goodbye  
i won't reach out for fear of not touching anyone



or i reach out and don't touch anyone  
or i'm thinking someone else's thoughts  
or i can't think my own thoughts  
i better stop  
i'm a long way from home

\* \* \*

i don't particularly care  
i keep falling asleep on the subway  
whenever i want to  
i think i need her more  
she has a good relationship with him  
he'll come stay with us for awhile  
once we lived together and loved each other  
now i dream about listening to them fucking  
in idle moments  
misery loves company  
a companion to share everything with  
i've been betrayed by all my friends  
then we have a good conversation  
he's an optimist, i'm a pessimist  
you're right, it's pretty silly  
we both agree -- we're on a spiritual quest  
we have the capacity to deny our natures  
i can't tell anyone what's good for them  
and neither can you  
now i have to take care of business  
i love her more than she loves me, sadly enough

\* \* \*

i feel like giving up  
i feel like i've given up  
i must realize that behavior has consequences  
don't you think i considered the consequences  
i didn't consider all the consequences  
maybe i'll have it all to do over again  
i'd do it all over again  
i couldn't resist  
i couldn't open my eyes to what he wanted to do with me  
what i want to do with myself, that's my problem  
like figuring out who i'm allowed to copulate with  
permission granted  
performed under the auspices of  
and brought to you by...  
don't you bring your friends into my house  
they're no friends of mine  
your lower lip is swollen, let me kiss it  
i don't think you understand where i'm at  
i'm no better than you  
she's no better than me  
you're no better than her  
he's hard to get along with  
we took a bath together and talked about saving our souls  
then i held her and touched her and fucked her until the sun  
came up  
it wasn't very satisfying, but the next time was better  
the time after that still very good  
but the last time was good for her, bad for me  
she left without saying goodbye  
will the children be more or less hurt  
what are friends for anyway  
am i supposed to be in control of myself or something

thanks for your fines sentiments  
you go your way and i'll go mine

\* \* \*

i've got to get out of this trap  
temperature 58°  
humidity 97%  
sunny & hazy  
it's taing up too much of my time  
and all of my energy  
between work-life and love life i don't have much time for my life  
my only life  
i might as well be what where who and how i want to be

\* \* \*

what can you expect from another person  
i don't expect anything  
well i do, i expect plenty  
well you better learn a little more about the world  
well i think i'm happier this way  
and more idealistic too  
which is how i want to be  
and isn't the idea anyway to forget all that  
people who act the opposite of what they mean  
except that it isn't so simple  
it's no exaggeration to say that they're failures as friends

\* \* \*

wanted so much to be home with you this morning  
i was so smashed last night that when he was fucking you i thought it was me  
the AMA says my diet will give me loss of kidney function  
there's a conspiracy to maintain the status quo, i think  
things do seem to work out that way  
could i stand a deserted island in the south pacific  
only if you could stand me, my baby

\* \* \*

i'm thrown back on the sound of my inner voice as it fades into  
silence  
you're away and i wait for the telephone to ring  
some people are merely vulnerable, others are victims, i think  
about you a lot  
your body is made for my touches  
your white skin, black curly pubic hair, your gorgeous whore's body  
i've made a study of you  
i'd like you to adore me  
in your own way you're totally sincere  
you're very easy to understand  
i wish you'd come home

\* \* \*

i woke up from a bad dream  
somebody was trying to kill me  
i'll never hold you in my arms again while you're fainting with  
passion

it's quite a loss  
i can tell what you want but not what you don't want  
not like those people who take off their personality with their  
clothes  
i wanted you to warm me up  
instead you wanted to cut your wrists  
if i wanted to insult you i'd call it inappropriate affect  
but i'm not sure who's inappropriate  
i want to go on living, with you

\* \* \*

she didn't realize that they're crazier than we are  
it made her feel better  
i feel worse  
everytime i go out  
she surprises me with her femininity  
she seemed so self-contained  
unresponsive is the wrong word  
now she seems to be in love  
in love?  
i love someone, i told her  
one thing you can count on is that i really care about you  
even if it makes you want to run screaming sometimes  
don't be so bitter  
she's not a two-faced bitch  
she just doesn't know what she's thinking  
i don't want to take her to bed anymore  
i don't really want to lose myself in anyone but you

\* \* \*

the night is lonely and anxious and long  
why have you come to visit me  
you're looking over my shoulder  
no you're not  
you're not really here  
but here inside me  
i've got you where you can't escape  
it's my trap  
it's also your trap  
so you and i are trapped in my trap  
and i'm trapped in your trap  
but are you trapped in your own trap  
i can't believe it  
no matter what you say  
i think it's your mind  
do you think i'm crazy  
i think you've got a good chance of getting yourself killed

\* \* \*

well here i am all tied up again  
so what if i'm stoned all the time  
pugnacious jaw stuck out, i don't have one  
tangle of mud and leaves by the side of a stream  
i shot her so he stole my gun  
a piece of nothing  
mass killer, a bad boy  
cornered by overcoats  
they want to make me better  
i don't understand

water gleams like crystal in the air  
many reflections

\* \* \*

regard this noble creature  
with his head swaying on his neck unable to think straight ahead  
but happy dreamer  
even then she moves away  
later she holds him to her breast and he feels terrific  
ah it's good to be stoned, his concentration goes up  
nothing to worry about  
he rarely worries however  
i was blind dear, blind  
very very blind  
he still is, isn't he  
what's wrong with me  
do you know anything about the possibilities and practicalities of  
emigrating to north africa  
it's something they were considering  
got to get out of the loony bin  
she's worked very hard at it and now she sees clearly  
as far as the end of her outstretched arm  
to have confidence in one's knowledge of what's happening in  
one's immediate vicinity would be quite reassuring  
she likes to be leaned on by several men  
you're for keeping that crucial inch apart  
he finds something of interest in both situations  
let's have ritual murder on tv a little human sacrifice could go a  
long way  
gangs of men raping women, gangs of women castrating men,

public fucking in the streets like dogs till no-one pays you critical attention is one possibility for reform  
actually, there's nothing to worry about  
it's still possible to eat drink have shelter and say exactly what you feel  
a blind man with sensitive fingers could do a jigsaw puzzle  
don't ask him why, don't ask me either  
we could play chess  
do you worry about snipers, only if the snipers worry about me  
this is my space, it doesn't look anything at all like what you're used to, it's really tragic you know  
so find another noble creature to hold hands with  
tell him what to do daddy  
my cock is beautiful  
he must walk the line between dignity and self-preservation  
at least my animal functions i'm entitled to keep private  
take another drag and let's talk about what it feels like  
what does the inside of her mouth taste like  
not as sweet as the juices that will run from her cunt if you can  
bring it to the point of secretion  
i'd like you to meet my companion along life's dusty highways  
we're not equipped for heavy thinking  
ah for a nuclear holocaust, just a few of us left  
even without that there's still got to be another generation  
we have an obligation to bring our own kind into the world  
though this planet is clearly not made to support three billion creatures of our size and habits

\* \* \*



one believes in the significance of his ancestry  
another feels he is the reincarnation of someone important  
it takes its toll  
i'm pretty crazy  
you're crazy? what about the rest of us  
she was deprived of love  
there's a certain reward in doing something well  
if they'll let you  
but they demand the impossible  
and their only reward is money  
for some reason i let them take advantage of me  
she speaks to them in a cold impersonal tone  
it makes for difficulties  
she's unhappy but retains her self-respect  
i think i have mine but it's hard to tell  
all of a sudden i realized we weren't speaking the same language  
all the time  
it's not just on important levels  
but in a million little ways  
he's beyond empathy

\* \* \*

o yes, something will certainly come your way dear  
you let things get to a point and then you can't stand it any more  
and you get up and do something  
that's better than my lying style  
i think her pain has a psychological origin  
don't you realize what you're doing to me  
i presume you're doing something to me  
you're a sensitive intelligent person -- naturally you want someone

you can talk to  
only don't try to define it too closely  
there's no way you can be sure  
as he said, there's no paradigm for predicting satisfaction  
i grinned, what did he think i meant  
anyway, don't be too sure about what will please you  
it cuts off the possibility of your own changing  
yes i have a tendency to do that  
a method for getting at feeling:  
try one on for size  
i love you  
i don't love you  
i love you

one likes someone or one doesn't like her  
i don't like her  
i don't love her  
what do i feel

she doesn't feel she can be a part of that place  
i should put my money aside and say i'm going to use it for some-  
thing nice of which she can be a part  
she'd feel like i was treating her like a baby and she'd be right  
not completely right  
but right  
but you have a right  
well  
you've made me feel much better

\* \* \*

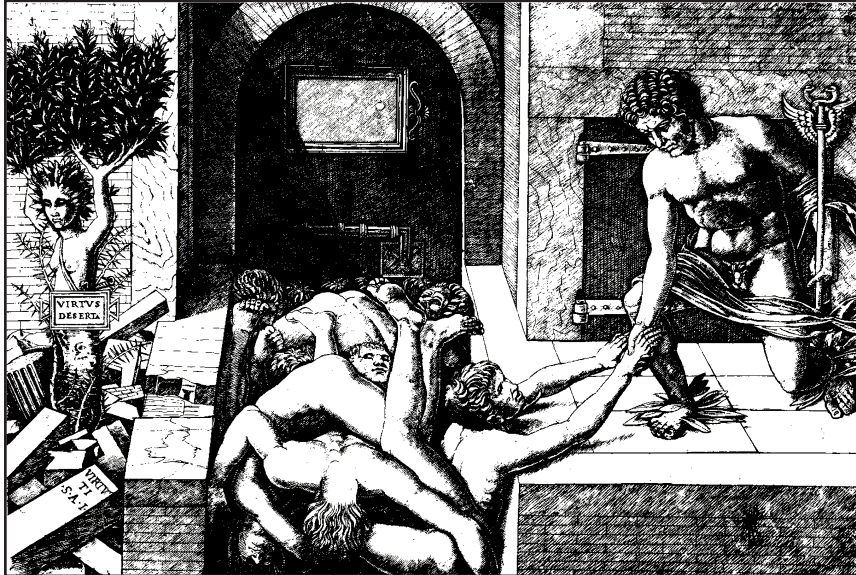
hey friends  
the quality of life is really low  
let me tell you something  
you want to be comforted  
you've got a real mother thing  
and it just doesn't make me feel right  
you're not telling me anything i don't know  
she said i was really buggy about him  
i think she misinterpreted my reaction  
it's a good thing i didn't sleep with you last night  
i tried to say i'm sorry and couldn't get the words out  
what's wrong with you! come in and sit down  
i don't think that's a very good idea  
okay, go! goodbye!  
i turned around and left  
so long  
we couldn't get on the ferry  
so let's go back to the fire  
you've got a baby body, pretty  
why do you think i didn't really want him to touch me  
i think things are starting to break out in people  
but he didn't realize which people i was talking about  
the citizenry, i mean  
apparently, when everybody isn't totally insane you can get a bag  
of groceries for \$3.75  
also, the landscape can capture your mind on a beautiful island  
one doesn't run through two other people in four days  
did i forget that  
is the idea to look more desolate than i feel  
well, i want to be honest after all  
and in the absence of any reason i still feel that way  
i mean any way i happen to feel

so put your hand on my neck  
i want to imagine i know something about how she feels  
my body is invariably an object for everybody else  
let's make a distinction between emotions and sensations  
fear and pain, for example  
can i feel her fear? her pain?  
i can feel her fear  
some people say they can feel her pain  
so pain can be an emotion  
my sensations are private  
which is why i can spend my time running from one spasm to  
another  
and nobody any the wiser  
one afternoon in the woods i met a movie star, an immense pig,  
and a goat that wanted to fight  
i also spoke objectively about history -- someone i used to know  
one day i left my wife and went off with a girl i had met once  
my wife took our son and went home  
later i followed her and persuaded her to come back  
then i left again and went off with a girl i later fell in love with  
this is not difficult to understand  
i don't need anyone to explain me to myself  
it's really disgusting to pretend that nothing is sacred  
let's at least have secrets worth keeping however  
if i can't be a big man i'll be the littlest -- a disappearing act  
so when you've said everything, i've got everything left to say  
i've performed an act of identification that's left me standing on  
both sides of the fence  
pieces of my body were extruded at odd angles  
an image that i knew the significance of  
who's kidding who

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*Leonard Neufeld* [signature]



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