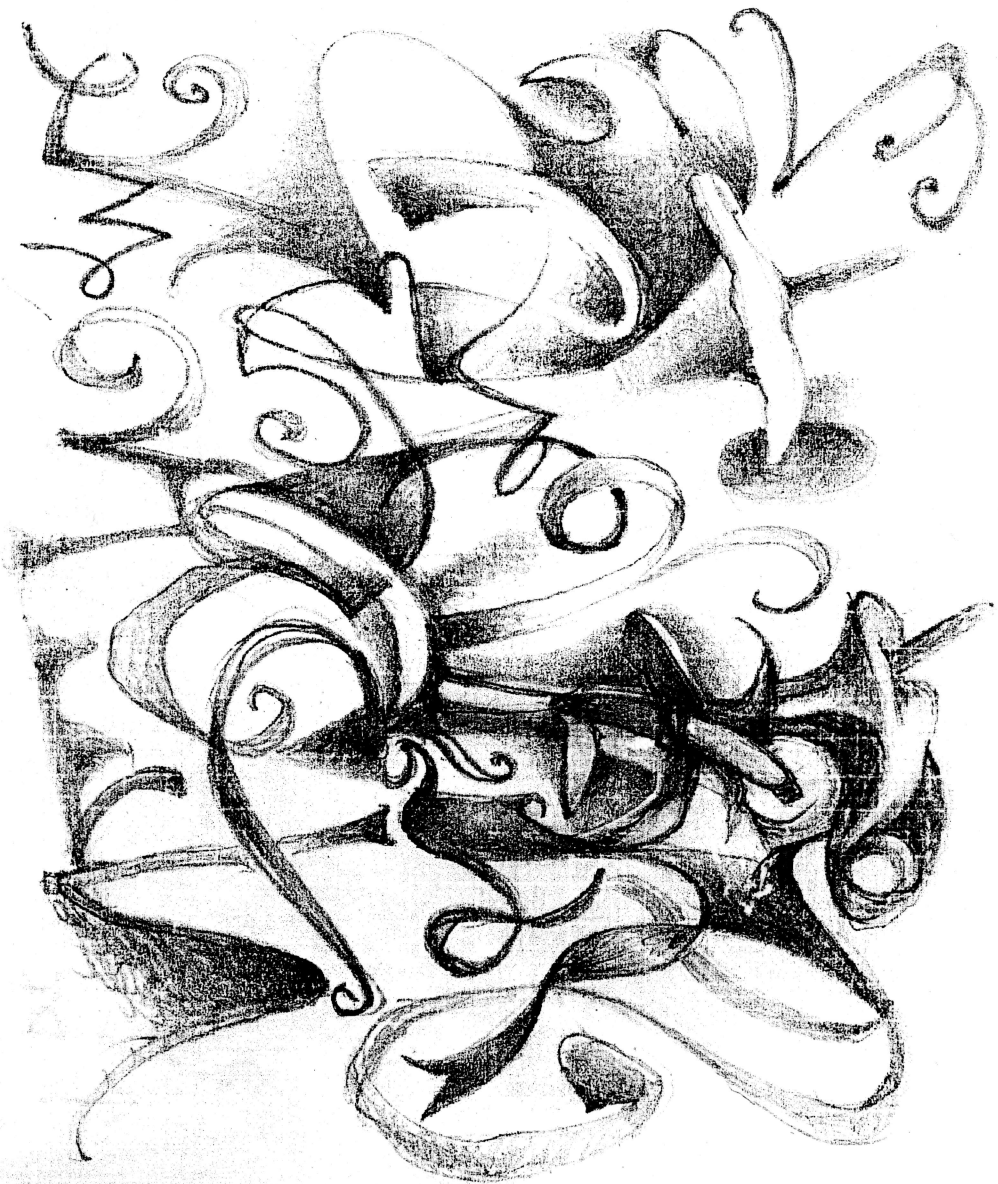


Tenderhooks

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Poems by

Tony Dingman

TENDERHOOKS

Brief Bio

Born in Los Angeles
1938—Zoetrope
Studios since 1968—
Studied with Lew
Welch—Living in
North Beach—

TONY DINGMAN

CC. MARIMBO
~BERKELEY~

I'M READY TO START

(for Jack Micheline)

in painted caves
in turrets of tanks
in sweat lodges of great
chiefs
in the solitude of Alcatraz

I'm ready alright
ready to write on desert floors
in a Cadillac going through
the car wash
at the bar of Musso & Frank

already I've done it in the
Istanbul Hilton
at the Little Bighorn
on the New York subway
on the planes over the Rockies

I'm ready for Micheline poems
and paintings
ready for astronauts on tequila
for the gatekeeper counting dolphins
for Lew Welch in the candy
store

in language laboratories
in gatherings of collectors of
militaria
in a pressure suit off the Mariana
Deep
in coffeeshops full of gossip

ready to listen for frogs in
the night
to listen to Glenn Gould do
the variations
to Joe Alioto read James Joyce
to listen for the word of love

9.august.97

TENDERHOOKS

To Jack and Agneta Hirschman

ART WIDOWER
(for Diane)

I've lost her to
the Summer Wind

To Picasso, Pissarro
& Soutine

To that Thinking
Thinker

To Brancusi's Gran
Preoccupation

To Muses by the
Nines

To lacquer, thinner,
paraffin & wax

I've lost her to
Intuition

To Divination, To Post
Dramatic Symptoms

To Henry Moore's Depth
of Surface

To bronze, marble, wood
& iron

To buffers, grinders, sanders
& drills;

TALK ABOUT

Going
out
the
door

you're
not
coming
back

until
you've
found
delivery

heard black frogs croaking xingu xingu
seen llamas climbing Macchu Picchu
contemplated Buddha under the fig tree
followed the orange & red bird of paradise
downed a Foster's beer in dusty Alice

Talk
about
moving
along

getting
that
second
wind

just
isn't
enough
time

running down the slopes of Mount Fuji
taking a fast taxi from Copacabana to Ipanema
bouncing over Roman cobblestones after pasta
taking a hydrofoil to Portuguese Macao
felt wind in the trees of Lowell Massachusetts

THOSE LUSCIOUS CURVES

descendant and
rounded

pliable and
soft

a mammary
rapture

pendulent and
warm

the mother of
mounds

clothed or
not

supine or
aqua-buoyed

supported or in
freefall

a smooth
vavoom

the most sublime
pillow

the addendums of
Diana

LOWER CASE TACTICS IN A STRATEGIC WORLD

1

That little poem with
Soft lips going over the
Garden wall disguised as
Spring pollen.

2

The rivet helping hold
The beam supporting the
Rotor-blade of Red Cross
Helicopters with food.

3

The Kindergardener with green
Crayons bringing the jungle
Back to life including
Two blue hummingbirds.

4

The postman stopping to
Talk with the little
Old lady who waits to
See him all morning long.

5

That leaf coming ashore
To build the mulch
To feed the trees that
Cool the glen.

6

The gentleman traveler who
Tips the maid who
Buys a toy for her
Sister's kid in the hospital.

7

The gentle soul, shy as an
Antelope, pro-offers his love
With a box of chocolates
On St. Valentine's Day.

I'VE GOT TO

Get off this page
to get out

of my door to get
into my car

to make my pick up
to go to work

in a timely and
professional manner.

15.april.00

THIS PAGE IS NOT POETRY

I'm not a writer

but everyday
irresistibly I am drawn
to pencil & paper
and then to my typewriter.

I think, I remember,
I read myself writing.

I want to talk to a friend.

I have something on paper.

Everyday the uniform page.

Voices from the eight & a half
by eleven stage.

A talking white plain.

A talking rectangle.

A talking frame.

Does any of this
make sense?

Does anyone write
on a square?

Is the first thought
the best thought?

I've got to call Don.

I've got to ask Curt.

I feel like licking a stamp.

This Theater of The

Page is finally

only an urge

fueled by an alphabet.

I push. I pull.

I am pushed. I am pulling

and there are no ropes.

There are no curtains.

No props.

No costumes. No tickets for sale.

It is raining again. I see an ant

scouting. He is not someone

in bed with a pencil. Does he hear

how wet tires sound? Anyway

the water

surrounds us.

20:jan:93

JOHN McFEE & SHAD FISHING

1
He hooks fish, I
hook water.

2
Jigging is twitching
the line.

3
Like Salmon, shad
return to their
native river.

4
But no one—bartender
or biologist—really
knows why shad respond
to lures.

5
"Position counts"

6
"And there are Larry
Birds in the river.
Joe Dimaggios, Ben
Hogans. Reds Grange."

the slobberer
of lust

the werewolf of
anger

the klepto of
revenge

they live for a
bottle

the giggler of
hysteria

the rat of
gossip

22:dec:92
(Eugene O'Neill)

WHERE THE THREE HUNDRED YEAR OLD TREE HAD BEEN

To identify with that
space

which only light can
fill

and to think of that
place

where memory of an actual
object

leaves a trace that defines
emptiness

which is the parable
of poetry

that a thinghood of
things

transmuted into air
alive

as sense vacated into
resource

I HAVE A FRIEND

who is
a poet
& who
writes
about
significant
people &
events.
He has
a Rodney
King poem.
He has
Cesar
Chavez's
Eulogy.
He or-
ganized
a reading
for the
murdered
Salvadorean
Archbishop
Romero.
A hunger
poem,
a home-
less poem,
anti-war
poem,
non-violence
poem,
(domestic or
international)
holocaust
poem,
ecology
poem,
skinhead
poem,
a greed
poem,
a cruelty
poem,
and a
tornado

if necessary.
Recently
his mother
died so
he went
back to
Detroit to
visit old
friends
& places
resulting
in a
homage
to Moms
& his
childhood.
He fights
injustice,
his ex-wife,
the bottle,
bullies,
fools,
fops,
rapists,
muggers,
developers,
spiritual
misers,
false poets
(and how)
liars,
cheaters,
kill-joys,
sadists,
military
dictators,
child
molesters,
short change
artists
& loud
mouths.
He is
Gene
Ruggles.

MORNING METAPHORS

You are my space station
You are the lilacs behind
the barnyard door
You are two green pools
You are a 55 cent stamp
You are Agapantha along the
Nile
You are the Kaiser's orderly
You are a slow motion dream
You are a big yellow painting
You are a feathered mask on
San Marcos Pass
You are a Modigliani neck
You are an eagle eye
You are a newly washed car
You are Charlie Mingus driving
down Chestnut
You are a jar of pecan nuts
You are nice to an 83 year old
lady
You are a cultivated garden
You are my fountain of youth
You are a bedroom safari
You are a foolproof kiss
You are a gift of time and
coincidence
You are my lost and found
You are Emily Dickenson come
out of her room
You are a private eye searching
for a laugh
You are my Suicide Prevention
Clinic

LEW WELCH

"Lewie never really
realized
he was who he said
he was."

"He said he was a
great
poet and he was."

"He said he was a
great
teacher and he was."

"I wrote a short
story
about him in my
book
The Class of '49."

"It's called One Ball
and it's
about attention and
distraction

and that's what pool
is all
about and that's

what life is about
too."
(Don Carpenter)

RAID KILLS BUGS
DEAD!
(Lew in Chicago)

Dullsville, and the
laundry
goes flap flap flap.

Pirouetting endlessly
in front
of the mirror . . .

THE MUD AND THE STARS

From the
goop

From the
ooze

From the
muck

Comes the
lotus

From the
dreck

From the
glop

From the
gunk

Comes the
lotus

From the
swamp

From the
sump

From the
slime

Comes the
lotus

16:aug:96
(for Don Sherwood)

Where to go,
Frank,
how to stay
under Hitler's horrific
gospel of hate-krieg
& solemn insanity.

So it was,
raus & schnell,
pork chops for cover,
Slimovitz for
the Gauleiter,
watching Ustachi
string barbed wire.

And you with
Mendelssohn & Pascal
in your blood,
with Benny Goodman
on BBC,
your mom's chimera
of escape
of deliverance
away & into
the leatherneck grail
of eucalyptus
& oranges.

8:july:93
(for Frank, who made it)

We
come
into
this
world

without shoes but sometimes we go out with our boots on.

Tin-
to-
retto
would
not

have dreamed of painting an angel with shoes. "He who has

wings
has
no
need
of

shoes." This dear angel, the worker-bee of heaven, still

more
graced
than
any
human,

never has to bother with socks & laces. Why walk when you

can
fly.
Divine
messenger
who

not even Caesar dare kill if he or she bears bad news. Clouds

can
not
hurt
your
feet.

25:june:93

Mothers are gods
Children are angels
Caves are homes
Sand to sleep on
Water to love
I want a multiverse
I want formulas
I want light speed
I want expansion
I want cosmic fire
I want panstellations
Frank, so what
Frank, then what
Frank, what if
I want reduction
I want condensare
I want hippity-hop
I want shaboom
I want razzamatazz
I want Jazzbo Collins
I want Rimbaud
Gagarin in space
Teresa in India
Damian in Hawaii
Caruso at the orphanage
Billy Budd on deck

20:june:95
(Frank Dietrich)