



POETRY

ANONYMOUS AS DUST

BY V. F. CALVERTON

BEFORE I die I should like to know
That what I've felt, been, was more than sense or sentence,
More than color, sound, smell, compacted within my brain,
More than the machinery of my own deception,
Telling me what is not, is,
And what is, is not.
To know that I was really I
And not some chimera of corpuscles, ligaments, nerves,
Anonymous as dust,
That I that lived above, beyond, bone and tissue
Possessed in my I'ness a secret
Unrobbable as light.
To know that would mean knowing all:
The quiet strength of trees, the warm fecundity of earth,
The sinews of silence, the magic of speech,
The whys, the wherefores, the whens.
Where knowing would be being, and being knowing,
Both without end.

STREET CORNER COLLEGE

BY KENNETH PATCHEN

NEXT year the grave grass will cover us.
We stand now, and laugh;
Watching the girls go by;
Betting on slow horses; drinking cheap gin.
We have nothing to do; nowhere to go; nobody.

Last year was a year ago; nothing more.
We weren't younger then; nor older now.

We manage to have the look that young men have;
We feel nothing behind our faces, one way or other.

We shall probably not be quite dead when we die.
We were never anything all the way; not even soldiers.

We are the insulted, brother, the desolate boys.
Sleepwalkers in a dark and terrible land,
Where solitude is a dirty knife at our throats.
Cold stars watch us, chum,
Cold stars and the whores.

TWO ALABAMA WILDCATS

BY JULIAN LEE RAYFORD

I CAME upon two Alabama wildcats,
panting, panting in a cage.
And they bent upon me all the venom
in their flaming, yellow eyes,
their spirit no more diminished
than fire is tamed within a grate.
Two Alabama wildcats, glowering, smoldering,
in a rage that Death alone subdues.
And I thought, watching those inferno-eyes:
"Little brother, little sister, teach me,
endow me with this flame that devours
all cowardice, all resignation.
So many fears imprison me,
I need your flame of hatred
to burn my cages down."