

*As If I Didn't Know*

I found myself  
in a hotel room  
drinking a vodka and cranberry juice-  
a 16 year-old-girl's drink  
looking around  
at a room full of  
strangers

the chair in the  
corner of the room  
seemed most comfortable  
to me and I thought  
maybe if I sit still enough  
and quiet enough  
people would  
forget I was  
there

to them  
I was just  
another poet  
and if you know a poet  
then you know exactly  
what I mean

at any moment  
I was going to pull my cock out,  
jump up on the bed  
and recite

no thanks.

I made my way to the bathroom

drinks were in the tub

a tub where 1000 different  
people fucked  
and bathed  
and probably shit

I thought this over  
then took a beer and drank it down

I sat down on the toilet  
closed the door  
and listened to the muffled  
conversations

they were all so  
routine

and the women I had gone with  
had long ago left out  
to try and get pity  
from another sap  
and now I was stuck

the only music playing  
was barely audible  
coming from a small black box  
in the corner of the room

a small group of people  
danced around it

then there was a  
knock on the door

within the crowd  
was a face I had seen before  
a face that had been to countless  
numbers of my poetry readings

a face that  
had written me letter after letter  
with his own poetry enclosed  
strikingly similar to mine

a face  
that had been transformed  
to look just like mine

I had noticed

that with each reading  
he started to look  
more and more like me

it gave me an uneasy feeling  
seeing him there-  
the remnants  
of the end of  
Orwell's  
*Animal Farm*  
in my mind

He wore an argyle sweater  
and corduroy jacket  
with khaki pants

his beard was unkept  
and his hair combed back  
hidden beneath a wool cap

I thought about killing him  
then I thought about calling him out  
then I thought about nothing  
just sat drinking my beer

he glanced at me  
and made his way over

“Hello.”

I didn't respond

“Hello.” he said again

again, I did not respond

finally he went to the balcony  
where impure drugs  
were being used  
and took part

a line of cocaine  
off the banister

I felt better,  
I didn't use  
and I felt my independence restored

I took a pen out  
and wrote a poem  
on the hotel room notepad

I read it over  
and was pleased

that was my defining factor

they couldn't  
replace a soul as warped as mine

they couldn't  
write the words  
that I have written  
and will write

once again  
I reign supreme  
over the wanna-bes