

Holy Sonnet

Jerry Giddens

Joy in noise of baseball radio
Frequencies numbered all along the dial
Each deep spring till October blows
Let the nation fall the traffic pile

The planet all but quiet to the crowd
Vin Scully's voice replaces Chavez's tongue
"And the pitch" McGuire and the ball
Suspended above highway one o one

The monuments to human mission fail
Still the body politic absorbs
All that's left are moments to recall
All that's lived before is on the air

So time falls on my Virgin van
I radio ahead to Youngerland

A Villanelle for Franklin

You seemed to me a most beautiful rook
Aloof, on stage, consumed in an act for god
Acquired immune deficiency syndrome shook
I scanned for your number in my memory book
A celestial video hook-up prod
You seemed for me a most beautiful rook

Celluloid stereotype star agent booked
"Your frail deeds might have danced" to the critic's nod
Acquired immune deficiency syndrome shook
James Woods and Ted Danson stood as end books
To your mark in "The Onion Field" coy Nimrod

You seemed to me the most beautiful rook

You called for my first born for one longing look
That infant face to remind that taken Mod
Acquired immune deficiency syndrome shook
Though you, sweet friend, this Hollyrock took
Your face, not their image, brought Jesse's nod
You seemed to me the most beautiful rook
Acquired immune deficiency syndrome shook

For Franklin Seales

Saint Mary's Gate

(song for rock ensemble, w/gospel choir)

(Spoken) Norman lived in a world of steel mills and his bedroom, of dark hair or maybe bleach blond, of good priests and bad priests, of sanity and insanity, of outcast and alienation, of radios and more radios, and finally instead of life, suicide. I had one of Norman's radios. I could never look at it without thinking of him.

Tonight
the wind is hungry
calls out to Norman
through the radios:
"Come to Saint Mary's Gate.
Come to St. Mary's Gate.

Tonight
with all the radios,
tightly clutching
the rosary beads,
you'll see him
headed to Saint Mary's Gate,
headed to Saint Mary's Gate.

Tonight on a frequency unknown
Norman will listen
to the radios,
all the way to Saint Mary's Gate,
all the way to Saint Mary's Gate.

Tonight
in a closet full of dreams
the radio's watched
as Norman hanged
a sign on Saint Mary's Gate,
a sign on Saint Mary's Gate.

Tonight
the wind is hungry
calls out to Norman
on the radio:
"Come to Saint Mary's Gate,
Come to Saint Mary's Gate.

---by Jerry Giddens