

The 3 X 5 Poems

The 3 X 5 poems are so called because many of them were written by typing them on 3" X 5" sheets of paper. I had acquired a stack of such sheets and used to crank them into my typewriter (which I used for 90% of my writing) and bang them out. These were all very short: the products of sudden inspiration and very little else; I do not remember ever revising one of these while writing it, although I have attempted to massage many of them into longer works from time to time. I often pinned the latest one up on my bulletin board, and for a long time I kept a

stack of them up there,
occasionally changing the
one on top.

Many of my poems, earlier
and later, have the
character of 'the 3 X 5
poems,' but most of this
group were actually
written on the 3 X 5
sheets, all together
during 1972, mostly in
Niagara Falls, New York,
although some were
possibly written in
Oxford, Ohio.

my poems move
out like incidental
jokes
the throw-aways
that always
make them laugh
and wonder

the spread of
semen a faint
surprise and sigh
his coming
like a tear
or a rescue
helicopter

his demands
are real
like hers

they do
not lie on
pages but
in bed
they are not
brushed upon
the ceiling
but held in
hands too
tightly

poems
attack the silence

in spurts
my head

my pen

attacks
the page

he thinks of
suicide
today and writes
his poems in
silence
inner
confrontations
and all the
questions of his
memories
rocking
gently in his
arms
last night

bra backs
behind them
i sit
staring
at the
walls and
windows
and the
spinal
curvature
thinking
of the edges
of the film
that flicker
on the screen

i've seen it
all through
twice today

i type the
words
 "fallen
touches"
and it leaps
at me

touches

it looks so
wrong, so soft
and French
and oooo
instead of
utch

toooches
tutch

fallen touches
exhausted kisses

*The group dates from c.
1972*

*This collection of 3 X 5
poems was originally
compiled in 1993. I have
revised the formatting
using XYWrite for Windows,
to produce this version
exclusively for Adobe
Acrobat, reproducing the
original page size and
type face.*

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