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Lucretius, III, 1053-1076

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L A M E N T

Loving, the god was mine
 and I did eat;
 blood warm from his great heart
 in mine did beat.

Beloved, I was the god
 the bread, the bride:
 and daily was devoured
 and daily died.

O let me love again
 and no god be:
 unloved, but nourished by
 divinity.

JESSAMYN WEST

LUCRETIVS, III, 1053-1076

Baudelaire knew what it was like,
 The typewriter keys red hot,
 All the paint brushes a yard long,
 The paint mixed with chewing gum.
 I write letters and don't send them;
 Dream away my poverty;
 Make dozens of incredibly
 Bad sketches; reread the great
 Masterpieces; review my
 Greek and Chinese, and discover
 My vocabulary is gone;
 Take my pulse; start out on walks,
 And return home; my mind deep
 And clear like the Deipnosophists.
 Jean-Jacques, Amiel, Bashkirtsev,
 It is possible to produce

A very influential
Ontology out of such
Material, of guaranteed
Ecumenical provenance.
Porch and Garden up to date,
Kierkegaard and Sacher-Masoch,
"One feels like a man about
To be executed." Niebuhr
Discovers that everyone
Is his own Wanda Guillotine.
Liberal Protestantism
Goeth at last to its long home,
Only a few hours behind
The Capitalist System.
Die Ausrottung der Besten.
Just think, all the patronesses
Of the surrealistes feel
Like this all the time. In fact
Practically every female,
With an income, in our set does.
"In the cold autumn moonlight
The cicada dies by its shell."
Even in jail, Mirabeau
Found work for idle hands to do.
The Rule of St. Benedict
Is very explicit about
The sickness that destroyeth
In the noonday.

One advantage
Of being learned, is that
There is no fix you can get in
Where you won't find company,
Even if your advisors
Cannot be called very helpful.

KENNETH REXROTH