

Fred Johnson

AMERICA

who else has written about you?

Ginsberg? Whitman?

Baraka

 maybe spoke of you

America

 they loved you

at least enough to write

they wrote love america

and your answering echo

 falling

into the syrupy dregs

of their coffee cups

 murmured

something like love

your icy-wind breath

 whipping around

chipped brick corners

of cold water tenements

sounded a little like

 love.

America, who else has sung your songs?

who else has shouted your name

drunk beyond their means to be;

high on the smell of you,

grabbing huge handfulls

of your concrete institutions;

who has loved you more than your poets--

and every man is a poet.

hey
you jive time no count dude
you better get it together
stop getting lost lost
in your sanctimonious
white nightshirt lost
being kinder somewhere else
then we'll see
if those were your balls splattered
on that white adobe wall