

AFTER A MORNING AT THE UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE

Sitting
out with bags of garbage at
24th and Mission...beautiful
day to dispose of myself with

McDonald's across Mission and
Pioneer Chicken across 24th and
me beside my bags of garbage before
the subway...not

knowing whether to wrap my short order life in
a garbage bag to be ground up in
the teeth of the next truck or
submerge myself into the subway to

throw myself in front of a train...having
just come from the unemployment office to
fill out the forms for my
unemployment interview tomorrow

me

too neurasthenic to
return to the unemployment office tomorrow or
wrap myself in a garbage bag or

go throw myself in front of
a train...three
old people sit down beside me with
the garbage to discuss their ailments, my

only ailment being
I cannot move...young woman pushing
a baby stroller in front of me...me
wanting to toss the baby from his stroller and

strap myself in his place to
shove a nipple (*any* nipple) in my mouth to
wash away my (yum
yum
goo
goo)
life



David Hilton

THE EYE

One day in San Jose
nextdoor to a family of lettucepickers
I read the entire
Leaves of Grass. The wall
shook with drunken Mexican howls,
slapping, punching, hurled bodies.
I kept reading—by blue-white neon,
by yellowing windowlight, by bruised dusk,
by black-cowled student lamp, finally
by nothing but the lambent page itself—
words and exhalations
irradiating my eyes.

Til then, I had known
only "O Captain! my Captain!" and
"Come up from the fields father,"
loving them both.

By midnight,
my brain had escaped the skull
and was pulsing crystal and waves
thrumming from floor to ceiling,
becoming the kosmos.
I was starved, I wept,
eyes streaming salt and soot.