

All  
Watched  
Over  
By

Machines  
Of  
Loving  
Grace




Richard Brautigan

Communication Company

ALL WATCHED OVER

BY MACHINES

OF LOVING GRACE

by Richard Brautigan  
Richard Brautigan  
" " 

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\$the communication company\$  
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any of these poems in magazines,  
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given away free.

Bill Brock lived with us for a while  
on Pine Street. He took the photograph  
in the basement. It was a beautiful  
day in San Francisco.

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of the copies are for sale. They are all free.

# All Watched over by Machines of Loving Grace

I like to think (and  
the sooner the better!)  
of a cybernetic meadow  
where mammals and computers  
live together in mutually  
programming harmony  
like pure water  
touching clear sky.

I like to think  
(right now, please!)  
of a cybernetic forest  
filled with pines and electronics  
where deer stroll peacefully  
past computers  
as if they were flowers  
with spinning blossoms.

I like to think  
(it has to be!)  
of a cybernetic ecology  
where we are free of our labors  
and joined back to nature,  
returned to our mammal  
brothers and sisters,  
and all watched over  
by machines of loving grace.

## → The Beautiful Poem

I go to bed in Los Angeles thinking  
about you.

Pissing a few moments ago  
I looked down at my penis  
affectionately.

Knowing it has been inside  
you twice today makes me  
feel beautiful.

3 a.m.  
January 15, 1967

→ Karma Repair Kit: Items 1-4

1. Get enough food to eat,  
and eat it.
2. Find a place to sleep where it is quiet,  
and sleep there.
3. Reduce intellectual and emotional noise  
until you arrive at the silence of yourself,  
and listen to it.
- 4.

→ November 3

I'm sitting in a cafe,  
drinking a Coke.

A fly is sleeping  
on a paper napkin.

I have to wake him up,  
so I can wipe my glasses.

There's a pretty girl  
I want to look at.

# Flowers for Those You Love

Butcher, baker, candlestick maker,  
anybody can get VD,  
including those you love.

Please see a doctor  
if you think you've got it.

You'll feel better afterwards  
and so will those you love.

# Comets

There are comets  
that flash through  
our mouths wearing  
the grace  
of oceans and galaxies.

God knows,  
we try to do the best  
we can.

There are comets  
connected to chemicals  
that telescope  
down our tongues  
to burn out against  
the air.

I know  
we do.

There are comets  
that laugh at us  
from behind our teeth  
wearing the clothes  
of fish and birds.

We try.

## Star Hole

I sit here  
on the perfect end  
of a star,

watching light  
pour itself toward  
me.

The light pours  
itself through  
a small hole  
in the sky.

I'm not very happy,  
but I can see  
how things are  
faraway.

## San Francisco

This poem was found written on a paper bag  
by Richard Brautigan in a laundromat in  
San Francisco. The author is unknown.

By accident, you put  
Your money in my  
Machine (#4)  
By accident, I put  
My money in another  
Machine (#6)  
On purpose, I put  
Your clothes in the  
Empty machine full  
Of water and no  
Clothes

It was lonely.

# It's Raining in Love

I don't know what it is,  
but I distrust myself  
when I start to like a girl  
a lot.

It makes me nervous.  
I don't say the right things  
or perhaps I start  
to examine,  
evaluate,  
compute  
what I am saying.

If I say, "Do you think it's going to rain?"  
and she says, "I don't know,"  
I start thinking: Does she really like me?

In other words  
I get a little creepy.

A friend of mine once said,  
"It's twenty times better to be friends  
with someone  
than it is to be in love with them."

I think he's right and besides,  
it's raining somewhere, programming flowers  
and keeping snails happy.  
That's all taken care of.

BUT if a girl likes me a lot  
and starts getting real nervous  
and suddenly begins asking me funny questions  
and looks sad if I give the wrong answers  
and she says things like,  
"Do you think it's going to rain?"  
and I say, "It beats me,"  
and she says, "Oh,"  
and looks a little sad  
at the clear blue California sky,  
I think: Thank God, it's you, baby, this time  
instead of me.

Hey! This Is What It's All About

For Jeff Sheppard

No publication  
No money  
No star  
No fuck

A friend came over to the house  
a few days ago and read one of my poems.  
He came back today and asked to read the  
same poem over again. After he finished  
reading it, he said, "It makes me want  
to write poetry."

I Lie Here in a Strange Girl's Apartment

I lie here in a strange girl's apartment.  
She has poison oak, a bad sunburn  
and is unhappy.  
She moves about the place  
like distant gestures of solemn glass.

She opens and closes things.  
She turns the water on,  
and she turns the water off.

All the sounds she makes are faraway.  
They could be in a different city.  
It is dusk and people are staring  
out the windows of that city.  
Their eyes are filled with the sounds  
of what she is doing.

December 30

At 1:03 in the morning a fart  
smells like a marriage between  
an avocado and a fish head.

I have to get out of bed  
to write this down without  
my glasses on.

## Our Beautiful West Coast Thing

We are a coast people  
There is nothing but ocean out beyond us.

--Jack Spicer

I sit here dreaming  
long thoughts of California

at the end of a November day  
below a cloudy twilight  
near the Pacific

listening to The Mamas and The Papas  
THEY'RE GREAT

singing a song about breaking  
somebody's heart and digging it!

I think I'll get up  
and dance around the room.

Here I go!

Our Beautiful West Coast thing

## Widow's Lament

It's not quite cold enough  
to go borrow some firewood  
from the neighbors.

It's not quite cold enough  
to go borrow some firewood  
from the neighbors.

log I wish

longest

## Lovers

I changed her bedroom:  
raised the ceiling four feet,  
removed all of her things  
(and the clutter of her life)  
painted the walls white,  
placed a fantastic calm  
in the room,  
a silence that almost had a scent,  
put her in a low brass bed  
with white satin covers,  
and I stood there in the doorway  
watching her sleep, curled up,  
with her face turned away  
from me.

Hollywood

sent

January 26, 1967  
at 3:15 in the afternoon

Sitting here in Los Angeles  
parked on a rundown residential  
back street,  
staring up at the word  
HOLLYWOOD  
written on some lonely mountains,  
I'm listening very carefully  
to rock and roll radio  
(Lovin' Spoonful)  
(Jefferson Airplane)  
while people are slowly  
putting out their garbage cans.

Hey, Bacon!

The moon like:  
mischievous bacon  
crisps its desire

(while)

I harbor myself  
toward two eggs  
over easy.

## A Mid-February Sky Dance

Dance toward me, please, as  
if you were a star  
with light-years piled  
on top of your hair,  
smiling,

and I will dance toward you  
as if I were darkness  
with bats piled like a hat  
on top of my head.

## After Halloween Slump

My magic is down.  
My spells mope around  
the house like sick old dogs  
with bloodshot eyes  
watering cold wet noses.

My charms are in a pile  
in the corner like the  
dirty shirts of a summer fatman.

One of my potions died  
last night in the pot.  
It looks like a cracked  
Egyptian tablecloth.

# Albion Breakfast

For Susan

Last night (here) a long pretty girl  
asked me to write a poem about Albion,  
so she could put it in a black folder  
that has albion printed nicely  
in white on the cover.

I said yes. She's at the store now  
getting something for breakfast.  
I'll surprise her with this poem  
when she gets back.

# It's Going Down

Magic is the color of the thing you wear  
with a dragon for a button  
and a lion for a lamp  
with a carrot for a collar  
and a salmon for a zipper.

Hey! You're turning me on: baby  
That's the way it's going down.

WOW!

## Your Catfish Friend

If I were to live my life  
in catfish forms  
in scaffolds of skin and whiskers  
at the bottom of a pond  
and you were to come by  
one evening  
when the moon was shining  
down into my dark home  
and stand there at the edge  
of my affection  
and think, "It's beautiful  
here by this pond. I wish  
somebody loved me,"  
I'd love you and be your catfish  
friend and drive such lonely  
thoughts from your mind  
and suddenly you would be  
at peace  
and ask yourself, "I wonder  
if there are any catfish  
in this pond? It seems like  
a perfect place for them."

## My Nose Is Growing Old

Yup.  
A long lazy September look  
in the mirror  
says it's true:

I'm 31  
and my nose is growing  
old.

It starts about 1/2  
an inch  
below the bridge  
and strolls geriatrically  
down  
for another inch or so:  
stopping.

Fortunately, the rest  
of the nose is comparatively  
young.

I wonder if girls  
will want me with an  
old nose.

I can hear them now  
the heartless bitches!

"He's cute  
but his nose  
is old."

At the California Institute of Technology

I don't care how God-damn smart  
these guys are: I'm bored.

It's been raining like hell all day long  
and there's nothing to do.

Written January 24, 1967  
while poet-in-residence  
at the California Institute  
of Technology.

December 24

She's mending the rain with her hair.  
She's turning the darkness on.  
Glue / switch!  
That's all I have to report.

## Nine Things

It's night

and a numbered beauty  
lapses at the wind,

chortles with the  
branches of a tree,

giggles,

plays shadow dance  
with a dead kite,

cajoles affection  
from falling leaves,

and knows four  
other things.

One is the color  
of your hair.

## Milk for the Duck

ZAP!  
unlaid / 20 days

my sexual image  
isn't worth a shit.

If I were dead  
I couldn't attract  
a female fly.

# Let's Voyage into the New American House

There are doors  
that want to be free  
from their hinges to  
fly with perfect clouds.

There are windows  
that want to be  
released from their  
frames to run with  
the deer through  
back country meadows.

There are walls  
that want to prowl  
with the mountains  
through the early  
morning dusk.

There are floors  
that want to digest  
their furniture into  
flowers and trees.

There are roofs  
that want to travel  
gracefully with  
the stars through  
circles of darkness.

Richard Brautigan was born in 1935. He lives in San Francisco. He has published three books of poetry: The Galilee Hitch-Hiker, Lay the Marble Tea, and The Octopus Frontier. He has written four novels: Trout Fishing in America, A Confederate General from Big Sur, In Watermelon Sugar, and The Abortion.

His novel A Confederate General from Big Sur has been translated into Italian and part of Trout Fishing in America was published this year in England by Penguin Books in The New Writing in the USA.