

Sightseeing

I live now in Hoboken, baseball's mid-wife,
and other lies about America. Puerto Rico
makes better shortstops now,
wiry, hungry teens playing in wintry temps
eager for August and the fans' dying devotions.
Me, I'm no idiot. I take leave as often as possible.
Driving south on the Jersey Turnpike
I speed past the warehouse and watertank world
of Jersey City's greasy shore, hiding
the lower half
of the World Trade Center complex,
buildings reaching out of their grey skin:
my ambitions don't soar that high--
I am searching
for a new transmission. As my VW rattles,
halts, then lurches toward some river,
unmourned pigeons wheel near the hated sun.
I see on my left the Statue of Liberty,
not taking it ~~pe~~ personal that she has turned
her green, water-soaked back to me
just as she did 25 years earlier, always
the solitary celebrant of the profane,
when I was on the Ferry
and a man jumped overboard, 10 feet from
where my aging grandmother and me gaped,
drowning, the Times solemnly recounted,
"more quickly than believed." Believe it.
Wives of ambassadors, even ex-movie stars
sink, like shocked cats thrown off rooftops.
I slide through the landscape like a lady,
slowly. My indifference to death
and engine failure--Jesus, it's all Germany's fault!--
is my one act of genius now.

(Cont.)