In the cathedral there is a smell of oranges and the bad cigarettes the old fruit vendors smoke.

This troubles my soul for it is not a religious smell.

My soul is the clear glass of the flask, my body is the wine. It has never been the other way around.

Sitting in a brown pew a slender woman weeps, and her body is in her tears. She catches her tears carefully; she is crying into her open hands.

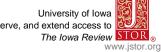
The rectory is upstairs. Its white wall crumbles like chalk. The paintings are really windows of clear, thin glass.

There are certain acts, once done, that make you a prophet. I have no way of knowing what they are.

The Dream of Execution / Henry Carlile

At dawn they led a man out and tied him to a stake. They were going to shoot him and leave him there. There was nothing anyone could do about it. The commanding officer stood smoking a cigarette while the firing squad composed mostly of conscripts

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leaned nonchalantly on their rifles, and a priest droned the last rites like a black fly in summer. No one would come in the final moment with a pardon. Whatever the man had done would be remembered: Possibly something as trivial as speaking out of turn. The man looked around him as though unaware that sentence had been passed and he would die.

Just before the order was given they led a woman into the courtyard, evidently for a last visit. We heard her say to him in a high, clear voice, "If I love you, it is not for anything you have done." And that was all; in a moment she was gone, the man was dead, and the troops were marching away. I don't know why I remember this sequence, or why it keeps happening over and over, as though I were somewhere outside myself waiting for it to end, to become something other than it is, her name the one word opening like a bullet in his lung.

The Woman in the Big Boy Restaurant and I / David McElroy

I love the way she bites the O of the donut and eats it into a C, the glazing sugar sprinkling her lap where a pink package crinkles in the heat.

I want to kiss the curlers in her hair. I want to flex my biceps, make payments on her station wagon, caress her cheek with all the little holes in it looking like a minute steak. I want to eat her face.

I want to take my clothes off and just like a pussy cat in catnip slither and hiss and squirm and roll all over her four blond brats.