

TEMPORARY/HELP

This is the middle class, lower. The tree on the lawn. Bushes in front of the house. Flowers in the yard. Lawn mowers growling. Dogs barking. Lots of dogs. Everybody has one, for safety, and they keep them locked up in their yards where they bark and bark behind their fences because no one ever takes them for a walk. Ice cream men. Lawn chairs. And beer and beer bellies and white paint on trim and brick houses and squares and hoses at the side of the houses. Squares, everything squares. Sidewalks and lawns and porches and houses and brains. TV sets. Garage sales and telephone poles. Kids selling koolaid in summer, shoveling snow in winter. Till they're old enough to smoke and drink and raise hell. They get a couple years of that, then it's factory time. Always one lawn mower going. Because everyone on this street works in a factory and they're all on different shifts. Maybe they communicate through their lawns. I think they work it out in shifts. Waking me here in the basement where I sleep. Eternal lawn mower of summer. I sleep in my parents' basement, a cave, dark, damp. Everyone around my age in the factory says they're not going to work there the rest of their lives. Just 'temporary.' The old guys laugh at them. They say *Temporary my ass.*

BUCKET

Ain't got no food
in my lunch bucket
in my lunch bucket
just a fruit pie
a sugar-bomb red-chunk
hard-crust goo-face fruit pie
I can lick it or suck it
or chuck it out
like it was muck or a hockey puck
ain't got no luck
in my lunch bucket
but I won't cry
I'll just say fuck it
fuckit. bucket.