

THE AMERICAN DREAM

The Mafia is like Jane Fonda,
it fills my dreams.
The sun wakes me all at once
like a flash fire of betting slips.
I arise from a gold casino
shadowy under chandeliers,
there were back rooms everywhere:
bales of reefer, burnished women, cameras
and air conditioners still on the truck—
I wanted to get in.
The Mafia is like Jane Fonda,

it has many roles to play:
yesterday in a parking garage
bruising my kidneys, balls, and knees—
today a dandy with a walking stick
offering me a numbers territory.
If he can, can't I
put on a violet silk suit and diamond rings
and move to a fat mansion in the suburbs?

The Mafia is like Penn Central,
it is weary of its old endeavors.
I am twelve years old, my father
wanted me to be a monarch butterfly.
“The cocoon is empty
like a Cadillac just before dawn
when you put the dynamite under the hood.”

Jane Fonda is not like Penn Central.
Her hair is like my wife's,
whom I clutch in place of easy money
before rising to the morning's razor.