

Winter 1955

a different way

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great competitive system that spawned him, and the society that nurtured him, scrambled out of his hole and plunged forward. Captain Montgomery traveled exactly the length of a standard roll of ticker tape before a .30 calibre slug smashed through his spine and lodged in his left lung. He sprawled face down in the mud.

"Mother," he bubbled.

The bullet had come from behind.

... a different way ...

... so I went a different way. Well I'm coming down Seventh see, and here's this character:

He's sitting in the middle of the sidewalk and fussing with his ear-lobe and staring at the ground.

Well he looks sorta helpless and drunk see, or else I wouldn't of paid no attention.

(Down there you get all these "Bohemians," talking in circles and living like pigs.)

But this fella looks like a decent old joker—just pretty much fogged—so I ask him,

"Ya need some help mister?"—no answer. He don't even blink.

So I nudge him, "Hey Mister!"

... His eyes slither up me—real weird!—and he growls, "I am thinking." That's that: he's an odd bird!

Well I should of took off, but I didn't. Well hell, I was curious. So I ask, "What ya thinkin?"

He says, "I am thinking of death and of children." ... There's something about him ... you know?

Well I guess I was nuts, cause I plopped down beside him—right there on the sidewalk!—and told him,

"Well, death I don't go for, but Boy I like kids; So tell me, how many you got?"

He sighs, "I was thinking of death and of children, and feeling quite peaceful and hopeful.

But now you have forced me to think about you. The world, and its sidewalks, are yours."

And then he gets up and walks off! Well my God! I just tried to be friendly ...

... Pete Cooper