

Darden Smith

"Two Dollar Novels"

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Well I turned right on first, left on white oak
back to my old neighborhood
I saw old Doc Randolph
He was mowing his yard
He's kept it up the best he could.
And Evelyn his wife of thirty-two years
She smiled as I drove by
And she waved from her front porch screen.
And she went back to reading her two dollar novel
And playing with her wedding ring.

A few houses needed painting
a few gates were unhinged
but generally the place looked the same.
The driveways were full of bikes and Buick sedans
things any good American would claim.
And all them other lovers
that married for cover
they were out for the sacred nightly stroll.
They were wishing they were characters in two dollar
novels
wishing for their weight in gold.

Now Mary Elizabeth
she's my high school sweetheart

she married my best high school friend.
He manages the hardware store
she became a nurse,
and I became a memory to them.
And all my other buddies
they just got lost in outer space
and they ran off and served their country well.
They're all fighting in a war of two dollar novels
where only the toughest live to tell.

So I turned right on white oak, left on first
out of that old neighborhood
I left Doctor and Mrs. Randolph sipping ice tea on their
sun porch
wondering if I'd ever come to any good.
And on a thousand shady streets

and in a thousand other towns
Now people, Lord, they're doing just the same.
They're all living their lives in two dollar novels
and wondering why the the world is so insane.
They're all living their lives in two dollar novels
and wondering why there's nothing left to gain.

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