

1974

People often
think to have
more food than
they need is the
pearl to be found
in the viridianed
slime in the pain
corrugated oys
ter of life but
I had never
seen people
eat the way I saw
people eat in Boston. I
saw little old gentlemen and
ladies swig down a gallon or two
of Oyster stew fresh out of a boiling chrome
bowl at the Union Oyster House. One night at Du rg
in Park I saw a skinny truck driver polish off three roast
ducks with gravy. I told two youths, Kevin McCarthy and Joe
Lavenia, about Beijing Duck. The next day they told me they had
gone to Joyce Chen's Restaurant on the Charles River for lunch and
had each eaten one. In the spring of 1974 I was eating lunch one quiet
Sunday at a quaint little seafood restaurant and fish market in Inman Square
in Somerville called Legal Seafood. Sitting at the table next to my table was a
giant man who I recognized as a player on the legendary Boston Celtics basket
ball team. This great man's giant shoes loafed out under his table and then under the
next one. He towered above his table like a castle in the clouds. His great hands were
three times larger than mine. I had never been in the proximity of a human being this
great. I was in awe. As I ate my blue fish, I watched in astonishment as the giant human
was served five or more heaping plates of fried oysters. He ate the mountains of fried
oysters faster than I could eat one egg salad sandwich. I realized: The Celtics are going
to lose later this afternoon: Visualizing: A green stomach filled with five huge helpings
of fried oysters in a green Celtics shirt trying to run a basketball court and succeed
ing in only flopping over and over itself in a Cocteau slow motion hell of ex
treme sloshed gray green gastronomic disability clunks: They lost: I real
ized that Green Pride: Green Killer Instinct: Green Talent: Greenⁿ
Patience: Green Experience: Green Over Size Heart: Green Over
size Lung: Green Stamina: Green Mental Energy: Greenⁿ
Chemistry: Green Love of Winning It All: Green Luck:
Green Intelligence: Green Hunger:
Hot Green Sweat: Green Seething
Ice Cold Ironed Green Guts:
And Green Diddling: Piddling:
Green Stopping And Popping
Fiddling: Weaving: Heaving:
Are not always prerequisites
for winning: Unless of course
as the great Arnold Auerbach
used to say: You're playing
chopped liver out there.

In view of the tear near
truth in the tear boiling marrow
of the sun: Tempo Perdue told me many
things: The best thing that Tempo Perdue
ever told me was this: "No body can do any
thing. All that any person can ever
do is make a gesture toward doing something." For a young man w
he should be able to do much more than a human being could ever
possibly be able to do: This was a very wonderful thi
I heard this I began to ease up on my punishing demands on my Self for ac
enjoy doing gestures toward intentional endeavors: Trying not to do what I w
ing to want what I do: Doing gestures towards doing things
Accepting all results with has much subtle wise light steady state happiness as
duce: And I began to accomplish a thousand times more than I
What I couldn't: Could not: Could never ever imagine: I accomplished that: The g
Tempo Perdue ever did for me was to let me go my own way: I ad
have followed him to the ends of the earth: He taught me all that he could: He gave me
Some people are very frightened when they are given their freedom: Some are angry: I was in Paradise: O
In 1974 I received news from Sinfan in New York that Tempo Perdue had died: One ne cries when a
baby dies: One smiles breathless when a sun sets: I smiled breathl
liquid sunshine rain drops a rose: As I remembered Tempo saying to me once as we
drove down a tree lined New Jersey country road: "Look at the light pouring in thro
ugh those trees: It was like that
when I was gassed in the Argonne in 1918." He took in a sharp fast breath and let it out ver
y very slowly:
In the long slow breath: Tempo said: "Thank God I'm alive!" Then: Now: I remembered how Tempo would
say he was not afraid to die as he had lived a full rich life: I wrote the following gesture toward the elegant
being of Tempo Perdue to Hubris Perdue on a piece of lined yellow pad paper: With an artless pencil stub:
Walked to the corner mailbox: Mailed it: "Dear Hubris: I liked Tempo very much: He was very good to me:
He breathed the marrow of the sun: Your Friend: David:" Sinfan called later to say that after reading my note
Hubris sighed: Looked up and sighed: And in her grief handed it to Sinfan: After Sinfan read it she sighed:
"Give me the letter! Give me the letter! Fasten your high chair belt: We're going to have a sick childhood
event: What a pity: What a pity: David's throwing his life away on all those dreadful people: However:
They're not churchgoers. And in that
dreadful place: Boston: Opening night: However: They're not churchgoers. And in that
g: What a dump: What a dump:
However: David has such a good side. However: He's like Tempo: His essence is damaged: How
ever: He's a little bastard, Dear: Like you: Dear: He'll never ever be anything: Never: Ever:
Amour: Not to anything: Oh: He'll have a happy life: That's patently obvious: But: He'll
never: Forever: And ever: And ever: I realized: OK Lady: You tried to
enter humanity and found the place al ready occupied: However: Lady:
You and no one else can beat that bastard: You can't: Can not:
N
ev
er.