

THE THRASHING DOVES

In the back of the dark Chinese store
in a wooden jailhouse bibbet box
with dust of hay on the floor, rice
where the rice bags are leaned,
beyond the doomed peekokoos in the box
cage

All the little doves'll die.

As well as the Peekotoos—eels
—they'll bend chickens' necks back
oer barrels and slice at Samsara
the world of eternal suffering with silver
blades as thin as the ice in Peking

As thick & penetrable as the Wall of China
the rice darkness of that store, beans,
tea, boxes of dried fish, doodlebones,
pieces of sea-weed, dry, pieces of eight,
all the balloon of the shroud on the floor

And the lights from little tinkly Washington St.
Behung, dim, opium pipes and gong wars,
Tong, the rice and the card game—and
Tibbet de tibbet the tink tink tink
them Chinese cooks do in the kitchen
Jazz