

**THE RITZ**

An elegy written on first reading that the Hotel was for sale.

1

A bird's been flapping in the chimney  
All the long day long.  
Smoked salmon instead of eggs for breakfast –  
Something must be wrong.  
An Egyptian waiter has kissed a girl  
In room number four-two-three  
(Why the hell did she make such a fuss  
Instead of calling for me?)  
The Ritz may be falling like London Bridge  
And I be a bloody fool,  
But in an hotel where Victor ceased to rule  
I would not wish to be.

2

It's hot as hell and the windows won't open  
All the long day long.  
It's freezing and the heat is off –  
Something must be wrong.  
A yank's been phoning all night to New York  
In room number four-two-three.  
Why the hell won't he wait till morning  
Instead of awakening me?  
The Ritz is falling like London Bridge,  
And I am a bloody fool,  
But in the hotel where Victor ceased to rule  
I would not wish to be.

3

I wait for breakfast ordered at seven  
All the long day long.  
Though the “tea” will be black and the toast will be soggy –  
Something must be wrong.  
They’ve chilled the claret and bombed the Terrine  
Ordered by four-two-three,  
And I quite forgot what I ordered them to bring –  
It’s a far off dream to me.  
The Ritz has fallen like London Bridge  
And I weep like a bloody fool,  
For the hotel where Victor has ceased to rule  
It’s not the hotel for me.

1976

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A copy of this poem is in the Georgetown University Archives.