



### *THE LOVERS*

Today unusual thundershowers  
break the heat.

I'm on a slow night shift —  
a couple walks in arm in arm.

The tall man, mustachioed, in mid-thirties  
asks me if I would answer

an important question  
with the absolute truth.

“What's the question?” I ask.  
He looks at the woman.

She's in mid-twenties, tall, brightly beautiful,  
wearing a white ruffled blouse.

“Which one of us,” he replies,  
“loves the other more?”

“To answer that,” I say.  
“I will have to consult

my crystal ball, meditate a while  
and watch you very closely.”

“Isn't she beautiful?” He asks.  
“Yes, very beautiful,” I answer.

He is pressing against her from behind.  
“That feels so good,” he says.

“It feels more wonderful to me,” she responds.  
“Look at her eyes! Aren't they gorgeous?” He asks.

I look into her blue green eyes  
with brown flecks floating through the iris.

“Yes, they are beautiful,” I say.

“What kind of hat,” she asks,

would look good on me?”

I try a Panama on her.

“No, winter’s coming,” she says abruptly.

Then I put a Sam Spade hat on her head.

She allows me to place the wide brimmed hat  
on and tilt it rakishly.

“No, I don’t like it. It’s too large,”  
she says disappointedly.

He finds the last Roaring Twenties hat  
amongst the overhead rare hats

hanging from nails in the rafters and walls.  
It’s a light gray fedora

with a black band that George Raft  
might have worn and she loves it.

I give him a brown felt Safari hat  
that makes him look like John Wayne.

“You look great!” They say to each other  
and kiss passionately.

The man pays \$52.12 and I say,  
“Now I can answer your question.

“You both love each other equally,  
but if you don’t, you’re in big trouble.”

She leans over and whispers loudly,  
“He has another woman!”

Standing at the door, he overhears and replies,  
“that’s not true. I don’t!”

They exit laughing onto Grant avenue.