

*An Argument Between Friends*

We meet at the bookstore

“You want to kill a bottle of wine tonight?” he asks me

which meant  
he wanted me to  
come over  
so he wouldn't have to drink alone

“Sure.” I said,  
I rarely passed up drinking  
other people's wine

I bought two books  
and I followed him to  
his semi-mansion

a house big enough  
not only for him  
but me as well  
and two or three of  
his whores  
that he'd placate,  
get drunk and then fuck

“You ever have Coca Cola with your wine?” he asked me

“Christ no, what are you nuts?”

“No, no, it's good, I had it in Germany.  
It's big over there.”

I opened the wine  
and poured it into some breathers-

the wine tasted like mulch

“This stuff is shit, man.” I said,  
“They must have left the stems in.”

“Yeah, but it gets you drunk.”

“Pass me over some of that Coke.”

anything  
could make this wine  
taste better

I poured the Coke in,  
it popped and bubbled  
in my throat

“Not bad.” I said  
“Where’d you get this wine?”

“Supermarket.” he said

“How much did you pay for it?”

“7.50” he said

“Jesus Christ, no wonder it tastes like shit.  
You’ve got all this money  
and you buy shit wine.”

“Just drink,  
unless you want to buy your own wine.  
Maybe you can take it out of the 100 dollars  
you owe me already.”

I shut up.

A few friends of ours come over  
and a few of my buddy’s lady friends

their skirts are so high  
the bottom of their snapper  
is hanging out

I feel  
Victor Charlie  
bulk up and move  
an inch-

The boys and I  
talk bullshit  
while my good buddy  
makes time  
with the two whores

kissing them both  
opened mouthed  
drunk on wine

he makes his way over to us  
to fill his glass

“What you guys talking about?” he asks us

“Books.” I say.

“You should be talking about pussy,  
then I’d have something to  
talk to you about.”

“You should talk about  
higher education.” I say

“Coming from the man  
who didn’t graduate high school.”

“Read the Harvard Classics  
and then talk to me.”

“Why don’t you get a Bachelors Degree.”

“Do you have a Bachelors Degree?”

“Well, no.”

“Then what the shit?”

“I’m sorry, I’m drunk.”

He walks back over  
to his whores

he takes one to the bathroom  
while the other plays  
with herself on the couch

Victor Charlie  
is dead as a door nail

so  
I take two bottles  
of the best wine I can find  
and get the hell out of there

I open one  
in the car

I see a cruiser  
so I keep it low

when I get home  
it feels good to be alive

like a sucker on the vine