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Heathen child find a god

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Cover Page Footnote

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Heathen child find a god

In love is every man a boy alone
in a parked car taking candy from a stranger
while everybody else is in the store
retrieving pennies for ford foundation gum
Robbing the poor box of incognito passion
this sacrilegious child will rub
police protected powder staining purple
his arms and legs and face for one woman
She will wash him with her oily tears
and dry hair he will mark with reverence
and open mouth his signature bound
by the tip of her tongue to never call again
himself one person and aspirined in the fever
of enlightened pleasure the end of all endeavor
he will train to learn that every joy
will dike sorrow against his straining fear
They will dent shelter in dark rooms
with dead flashlights in newsy corners
to tell each other of themselves
and be no longer strangers but inmates
in the unlocked tabernacle of one orange pulse
raising their eyelids in rhymed communal awe
prostrate at a gate that bars no road
but opens to a sandy ocean stretching
far beyond the horizon of reason
He will run in eager time
to the sound of his own heartbeat
through the silver field of happened
so that she will have to tell him that
not until he hears their child
may he grow a beard.

—THOMAS HUGHES