Two Dollar Novels

Darden Smith

Well, I turned right on first, left on white oak
Back to my old neighborhood
I saw old Doc Randolph
He was mowing his yard
He's kept it up the best he couldAnd Evelyn his wife of thirty-two years
She smiled as I drove by
And she waved from her front porch screen
And she went back to reading her two dollar novel
And playing with her wedding ringA few houses needed painting
A few gates were unhinged
But generally the place looked the same
The driveways were full of bikes and Buick sedans
Things any good American would claimAnd all them other lovers
That married for cover
They were out for the sacred nightly stroll
They were wishing they were characters in two dollar novels
Wishing for their weight in goldNow Mary Elizabeth
She's my high school sweetheart
She married my best high school friend
He manages the hardware store
She became a nurse
And I became a memory to themAnd all my other buddies
They just got lost in outer space
And they ran off and served their country well
They're all fighting in a war of two dollar novels
Where only the toughest live to tellSo I turned right on white oak, left on first
Out of that old neighborhood
I left Doctor and Mrs. Randolph
Sipping iced tea on their sun porch
Wondering if I'd ever come to any goodAnd on a thousand shady streets
And in a thousand other towns
Now people, Lord, they're doing just the same
They're all living their lives in two dollar novels
And wondering why the the world is so insaneThey're all living their lives in two dollar novels
And wondering why there's nothing left to gain

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