

A Supermarket In California

Allen Ginsberg

What thoughts I have of you tonight, Walt Whitman, for I walked
Down the sidestreets under the trees with a headache self-conscious looking
In my hungry fatigue, and shopping for images, I went into the neon
Fruit supermarket, dreaming of your enumerations!
What peaches and what penumbras! Whole families shopping at
Night! Aisles full of husbands! Wives in the avocados, babies in the tomatoes!
--and you, Garc a Lorca, what were you doing down by the watermelons?
I saw you, Walt Whitman, childless, lonely old grubber, poking
Among the meats in the refrigerator and eyeing the grocery boys
I heard you asking questions of each: Who killed the pork chops?
What price bananas? Are you my Angel?
I wandered in and out of the brilliant stacks of cans following you
And followed in my imagination by the store detective
We strode down the open corridors together in our solitary fancy
Tasting artichokes, possessing every frozen delicacy, and never passing the
Where are we going, Walt Whitman? The doors close in a hour
Which way does your beard point tonight?
(I touch your book and dream of our odyssey in the supermarket and
Will we walk all night through solitary streets? The trees add shade
To shade, lights out in the houses, we'll both be lonely
Will we stroll dreaming of the lost America of love past blue automo-
Biles in driveways, home to our silent cottage?
Ah, dear father, graybeard, lonely old courage-teacher, what America
Did you have when Charon quit poling his ferry and you got out on a
Smoking bank and stood watching the boat disappear on the black waters of
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