

## Hustlers

for Jerry Patterson ✓

Two beers screw my head up.  
I lean back against a dark wall.  
My long hair drifts in my eyes.  
Let's say the moon makes a decision.  
I land the corner legend surrounds.  
I say more than I pretend to.  
I prefer to be fucked to The Beatles.  
I stand with the guys I resemble.  
Jerry, Tom, Dick, Sam, Julian, Max, Timmy.  
Guess which of those names is perfect.  
We dream of a casual million.  
We light our cigarettes gently.  
I take what the night has to offer.  
I roll a ripe peach from one wrist to the other.  
I can't speak I'm so fucking stupid.  
Our bodies are simply stupendous.  
When we breathe, it takes us apart.  
You know. You're inside us.

Dennis Cooper Dream Police 1995  
Grass Press

(6)

## For Mark Stephens

My mother drank, and she sat  
in a house the size of the Hilton  
in one small room, at a black  
grand piano, through cigarette  
smoke, by a dinner so old it  
cracked like dried mud. A tune  
created her mood. Some whim  
was letting her play the same  
exercise seventeen times. She  
had been smart in the Fifties.  
She was not handsome, but she  
was composed, made me between  
vodkas. My room was up one  
or more of the stairways, left  
down the hall, left again. I  
knelt here, twisted a knob, and  
rock music rose genie-like in  
the room, gripped me and took  
me away. I'd leap in my room,  
hand strumming my belt like a  
rock star, lip-synching what  
hid my new thoughts in my body.  
When my sister split, there  
were places to hide in the  
mansion. Piles of her junk  
became far distant planets.  
I couldn't quite build a  
transporter, though I hung up  
black lights, sheets over  
lamps, played songs at half-speed.