



HarperCollins e-books



You Get So  
Alone at Times That  
It Just Makes Sense

**Charles Bukowski**



Charles Bukowski

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**You Get So Alone at Times That It Just Makes  
Sense**

 HarperCollins e-books







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listening to Wagner  
as outside in the dark the wind blows a cold rain the  
trees wave and shake lights go  
off and on the walls creak and the cats run under the  
bed...

Wagner battles the agonies, he's emotional but  
solid, he's the supreme fighter, a giant in a world of  
pygmies, he takes it straight on through, he breaks  
barriers  
an  
astonishing FORCE of sound as

everything here shakes  
shivers  
bends  
blasts  
in fierce gamble

yes, Wagner and the storm intermix with the wine as  
nights like this run up my wrists and up into my head and  
back down into the  
gut  
some men never  
die

and some men never

---

live

but we're all alive

tonight.





## red Mercedes

---

naturally, we are all caught in  
downmoods, it's a matter of  
chemical imbalance  
and an existence  
which, at times,  
seems to forbid  
any real chance at  
happiness.

I was in a downmood  
when this rich pig  
along with his blank  
inamorata  
in this red Mercedes  
cut  
in front of me  
at racetrack parking.

it clicked inside of me  
in a flash:  
I'm going to pull that fucker  
out of his car and  
kick his  
ass!

I followed him

---

into Valet parking

parked behind him

and jumped from my

car

ran up to his

door

and yanked at

it.

it was

locked.

the

windows were

up.

I rapped on the window

on his

side:

“open up! I’m gonna

bust your

ass!”

he just sat there

looking straight

ahead.

his woman did

likewise.

---

they wouldn't look

at me.

he was 30 years

younger

but I knew I could

take him

he was soft and

pampered.

I beat on the window

with my

fist:

“come on out, shithead,

or I'm going to start

breaking

glass!”

he gave a small nod

to his

woman.

I saw her reach

into the glove

compartment

open it

and slip him the

I saw him hold it  
down low  
and snap off the  
safety.

I walked off  
toward the  
clubhouse, it looked  
like a damned good  
card  
that  
day.

all I had to do  
was  
be there.



## retired

---

pork chops, said my father, I love

pork chops!

and I watched him slide the grease

into his mouth.

pancakes, he said, pancakes with

syrup, butter and bacon!

I watched his lips heavy wetted with

all that.

coffee, he said, I like coffee so hot

it burns my throat!

sometimes it was too hot and he spit it

out across the table.

mashed potatoes and gravy, he said, I

love mashed potatoes and gravy!

he jowled that in, his cheeks puffed as

if he had the mumps.

chili and beans, he said, I love chili and

beans!

and he gulped it down and farted for hours

loudly, grinning after each fart.

---

strawberry shortcake, he said, with vanilla  
ice cream, that's the way to end a meal!  
he always talked about retirement, about  
what he was going to do when he  
retired.

when he wasn't talking about food he talked  
on and on about  
retirement.

he never made it to retirement, he died one day while  
standing at the sink  
filling a glass of water.

he straightened like he'd been  
shot.

the glass fell from his hand  
and he dropped backwards  
landing flat  
his necktie slipping to the  
left.

afterwards  
people said they couldn't believe  
it.

he looked  
great.

distinguished white

---

sideburns, pack of smokes in his

shirt pocket, always cracking

jokes, maybe a little

loud and maybe with a bit of bad

temper

but all in all

a seemingly sound

individual

never missing a day

of work.



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