

Men

Tim Terhaar

Men and Their Thoughts

Every man thinks that all true thoughts are obsessive thoughts, like soldiers deployed to a jungle on the other side of the world in service of a war that began in ambiguity and continues in perpetuity.

Men and Their Plasticity

Every man thinks that poetry is for the birds, not the bees. He thinks he knows what he means by this, but that metaphor, like all metaphors, has never fit quite snugly among the jigsaw pieces of his mind.

Men and Their Hydration

Every man thinks of his soul as something that is being constantly ground into dust, which he dissolves into his drinking water by the spoonful every morning. The day his soul has been entirely reduced to powder is the day he drinks unadulterated water for the first time and promptly melts like the wicked witch he is.

Men and Their Struggle

Every man struggles all his life to raise his family up out of conditions of poverty or modest wealth into a more secure position of inextinguishable comforts. In middle age, he joins a delegation of prominent businessmen and petitions the regional authorities to construct a railway in his town. Half blind with old age, after his son has gambled away or drunk up most of the family fortune, he steps in front of a train on his way home after a full day's labour at the paper mill.

Men and Their Terror

Every man drives a hearse until he retires, at which point he asks his policeman friend to give him a handgun so that he can protect himself from the dangerous young families of suspect ethnicity who have overrun his neighborhood like a horde of people who expect to survive in the world.

Men and Their Recreation

Every man prefers to go hiking when everyone else is doing something else so that he can pretend to be more sensitive to the beauty of nature than other men, whom he secretly despises for endangering the tenuous existence of rare creatures by making boorish intrusions into the wilderness parks that he so lovingly tromps through.

Men and Their Fathers

Every man loves his father even though his father tortures mice for a living. His father used to give him for his birthday glass mice, ceramic mice, and guides to North American animals that fostered in him a paradoxical sympathy for the critters that lived in his imagination and in reality died, and were seemingly born for no other purpose than death.

Men and Their Shadows

Every man thinks of his shadow as the body of his soul, which is why he takes pictures of his shadow late in the afternoon and shudders when he looks at them later, as if he could then see some other man, more resilient and more ruthless than he, gazing back at him out of the faceless face of his own negativity.

Men and Their Pilotism

Every man takes joy in airplanes because he delights in fantasies of soaring above the clouds with other men not near enough to touch yet near enough to impress. He yearns to triumph over gravity so that he can finally suspend all decisions, including about whether to believe in the absolute or whether to risk his reputation by indulging in unseemly pleasures.

Men and Their Sons

Every man gives his son a gift without occasion exactly once, and usually that gift is the Motörhead album *Ace of Spades*, which he explains is quintessential. This is a way of saying “I love you.”

Men and Their Tears

Every man cries while listening to Enya.

Men and Their Barbarism

Every man envies the man who can pummel walls with his bare hands and chop up other animals with a smile on his face. He wishes that he, too, could generally believe in nothing, not even in his own significance or in the importance of such saws as love, charity, and wisdom. Mysterious is his failure to realize that he is already as empty as he wishes he were.

Men and Their Procrastination

Every man puts off the embrace as long as he can, because he knows that once he succumbs to the security of another's arms, he will never feel the need to stand alone again.