

I tried another approach. I placed a brilliant point on the lumbar vertebrae of a man clothed in black walking away from my camera. The trails were snails, lines clear and yet incoherent in an early morning continuum, before the real sun. Yet I saw the revelation of the hip's hidden sacrifice. It dominated my eye. Then -- terror, as the ghost came apart, and when I came to reassemble the skeins I found it hard to believe in what I'd done. I had been haunted by desires, but the desires became lines of abstraction at exact intervals.

And yet, I had heard an unhearable music; had seen a flight that needed no air. The hip may have swayed itself out of existence, the bird complicated itself into infinity. But wings still flutter in my eyes. A back sways down steps. Explanations spring to my lips.

#### THE MICE AND THE WALAM OLUM

Eating lunch, though we've only just finished breakfast. Taking notes, reading. Getting sunburnt at the same time (a black moth settles on a yellow navel), something I've just taken to.

"I'm only doing this, you understand, to get my daily dose of Vitamin D."

"So you say. But pretty soon you'll be spreading your fingers, just like the rest of us."

I move the chair sideways and sit across it. The back struts were depriving me of my full stretch rights. I turn to the figures in my notebook, bring them up to date for tax rebate ("business trip").

"Maybe you should put down what I steal."

I hike it up a bit. Include the cosmetic case deer-mice gnawed through to get at the almonds (why's she keep nuts with rouge and lipstick?). The two resident rodents loom over me from the roof. Groom each other. From time to time one looks down. With one of their great variety of sounds, at length one remarks to the other:

"They are peaceful. They have great things. Who are they?"