

Everyone

BARRY BALLARD

Everyone is born. Everyone grows, wonders,
and bleeds. Everyone hides when their parents
argue and divorce. Everyone goes to war.
Everyone pulls the trigger, wastes a year,
and is contaminated with the cancer
of guilt. Everyone suffers the torment
of death (walks through its smoke). Everyone explores
the risk of returning home and facing their fear.
Everyone is diffident, closed up,
and welcome to the bottle. Everyone
begs for a way out or something still sane
and familiar. Everyone sees enough
to ask for answers. Everyone becomes
a student who wants the world explained.

Everyone is insane and rattles
the system – and irritates. Everyone
marries, raises a child, builds a home,
and edges the landscape. Everyone sells
out, climbs the ladder and trusts the stable
economy. Everyone is stunned
by their own divorce. Everyone is disowned,
exiled, and broods in the concrete stairwell.

Everyone grows tired of hearing
about the mistake. Everyone changes,
takes up poetry, or music, or escapes
to a group. Everyone searches for meaning,
for the intangible they can live with.
And everyone waits....Everyone waits.