

Copy Cat Music

JOHN KRUMBERGER

I never asked his name
– no suitable pause between the torrent
of New York accented syllables that flowed
from that lovely Italian-Portuguese mouth
dragging on cigarette after cigarette
or erupting into the spasms
of an in drawn, cardiac sounding laugh
– though I marveled and still do
at the improbable happenstance
of such a near exotic creature
surfacing in Racine, Wisconsin,
wedged between the Danish bakery
and the Walgreens store and pharmacy.

Copy Cat Music featured rock, punk,
hip hop, soul. R and B, and anything
and everything from the 60s;
an act of love to preserve so carefully
the essential ache and ecstasy of the tribe
though not in canded, incensed fashion,
just row after unscented row of vinyl
and wall posters: Hendrix, Joplin, Donna Summer,
the surprise of the python in the back,

sleeping in its cage, a gumball machine,
juke box, fish tank, old and new turntables,
a Gibson guitar for sale, dance music playing.

And whoever he was, he was a match
lit in the rain, five years, maybe six
then gone, without warning,
not enough fellow oddballs I guess
to support and care for the cat.
I think of the tale of the Bodhisattva
meditating all day, every day
along side the heap of a garbage dump,
his laughter roaring at this world,
a world he chose to stay in, no matter
that he had been released from it.