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Practical Shooter Comes to Downers Grove

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Practical Shooter Comes to Downers Grove
George Starbuck

They've took my Mach-10 Special.
   They've took Dad's Remingtons.
When they get Bubba's, only
   The in-laws will have guns.

Saturday night's a longshot
   Contraption as it is.
A man without a Magnum's
   A piece of agribiz.

He might as well push daisies
   And model for a wreath
And pick a granite afghan
   To cuddle up beneath.

You've seen the streets of Berwyn
   In the county name of Cook.
We're talkin' cold survival.
   We're talkin' donnybrook.

What if a drunk accosts you
   And mouths an ethnic slur?
What if your wife takes refuge
   And you catch up with her?

It's people that kill people,
   An' people's bustin' west
Out of the inner suburbs
   Like they was air-expressed.

It isn't just lost hardware
   And that they got no right.
It's the humiliation.
   You take last Tuesday night:
There in my bed, defenseless,
   Woke up at three a.m.
And up the stair come footsteps.
   It had to have been them.

I was a sitting target
   Disarmed by liberals.
Ransacked my bedside table
   And all I found was pills.

You see the situation?
   You see the price of it?
A thousand drowsing suburbs
   Just waitin' to be hit.

What if it had been baddies
   And not Great Aunt Irene?
What if the one split-second
   When they're behind the screen

And I'm where I can zero
   Their shadow-image in
And they can't see who's pumpin'
   Their bellies full of tin

Goes by, in dumb frustration,
   While I'm still gropin' for
The family peacekeeper
   That I ain't got no more?

I tell you there'd be henchmen
   Emboldened by my death
Rampagin' into Downers
   Before you get your breath.

(It takes a heap o' henchmen
   To give them hophead hoods
The yellowdog bravado
   To raid the neighborhoods.)
It takes a heap o' henchmen
   In winrows up the stairs
Now-and-then, to remind 'em
   The country just ain't theirs.)

You think about your houses.
   You think about your wives.
You think about the access
   To ten-inch carving knives

And Lizzie Borden hat pins
   And side arms of their own
Among the rougher classes.
   Next time you hear the phone

Click off, because you answered
   In your best Eastwood voice,
You think about it, Mister.
   You only got one choice.

Stonewall 'em, like the heroes
   And braves of long ago.
A man don't need a castle
   To have an Alamo.