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Young Hormones Madrigal · *James Crenner*

Then you were a boy and could
raise excitement in your pants
equally with bad or good
literature or circumstance.

Reading “Blondie,” Joyce, or Farrell,
kissing Blondie, Joyce, or Snooks,
friction made you come a barrel—
fictions, girls, and comic books.

Was the world a dream, or real?
Who could really give a hoot,
dreaming of a real feel
of silky this or naked that?

Secret lusts inhabited
every lady on the street:
they were all at home in bed
admiring your prodigious feat,

even though they didn’t know it.
Cousins, aunts, your mother’s friends—
none were proof against your habit;
you knew both of all their ends.

Life was coming; coming, life;
death was Not Getting Any.
Even Holy Writ was rife
with tales of promised milky honey;

classes in biology,
civics, history, and Latin
were all crypto-anatomy,
the one idea to raise and fatten.

Cars were custom-made for just
one activity on earth:
for transportation take the bus,
Ford's invention was a berth.

Nothing live was safe or sacred
if it forked or had a rictus:
habeas balloon, or snake,
mandrake root, gazelle or *corpus*.

Then you were a boy and could
conceive of nothing greater than
to have a limb of polished wood
and a friendly, tireless, helping hand.