

up, then took the phone off the hook.

I looked at the phone.
what they didn't understand was that
sometimes there was nothing to
save
except a personal vindication of a
personal viewpoint
and that was what was going to cause
that blinding white flash
one of these days.

I walked across the room and
snapped on the
tv.

THE CONDITION BOOK

the long days at the track have indented themselves
into me:
I am the horses, the jocks, I am six furlongs, seven
furlongs, I am a mile and one sixteenth, I am a
handicap, I am all the colors of all the silks, I am all
the photo finishes, the accidents, the deaths, the
last place finishers, the breakdowns, the failure of
the toteboard, the dropped whip and the numb pain
of the dream not come true in thousands and thousands
and thousands of faces, I am the long drive home in the
dark, in the rain, I am decades and decades and decades
of races run and won and lost and run again and I am
myself sitting with a program and a Racing Form.
I am the racetrack, my ribs are the wooden rails, my
eyes are the flashes of the toteboard, my feet are
hooves and there is something riding on my back, I am
the last curve, I am the home stretch, I am the longshot
and the favorite, I am the exacta, the daily double and
the pick 6.
I am humanely destroyed, I am the horseplayer who
became the
racetrack.

— Charles Bukowski

San Pedro CA

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