

5/14/40 ✓ mdt
Street Interview

It's a real contrast here, where ^C there are ^{PA} ~~the~~ cement blocks; they're something I've always felt keenly about, the way the cement is laid out along the streets, it's consistent pattern; then, it's patches of metal, things like the sewers, that crop up now and then. Things like parking meters ^{SF} always seem to violate the whole pattern of view that you see. Things like this sign ^{SI} here that sort of imitate the street lights; they sort of reach out and grab you by the throat. Street lights ^{SF} sort of semi-nobility, sort of Bond St. effect; sort of quiet _____ that reaches out for your business, not in the red body sense, but like that one over there, Bigelow-Kennard, ^{SI} where the sign is indented. This whole realm of the reaching signs, like Plotkins over there, just reach out and grab you.

Like so many sort of pseudo-quiet streets. They're really ^C commercial, and meant to be commercial, they're meant to be busy. But the sort of things that go on here, the sort of commercialism that they represent, the quiet women's shops, they're not big or anything -- they like having the rushing tradè but it seems that they sort of exist for a rather limited few.

This is what? The old something church? ^B Nice stones. The streets around here though, although some of them try to be a little more brilliant than the ones next to them by means of ~~white~~ [?] bright signs, all have a real dull tone, this reddish affect, at least to me, and the only interesting variant I see is the brick streets which are ^{PA} new to me, something I've never experienced, at least in New York. They're sort of nice, though I'm sure they offer their element of danger, tripping old women and what-not. But the texture is ~~uninteresting~~ interesting, the varied color.

There's something interesting about these old alleys and the fire escapes. They sort of reach back into the last generation; I haven't seen many recently. In a real sense though, personally, ^{Felipa} [I in an area like this I've always felt sort of like a stranger, like I really didn't belong in this sort of environment, the Ritz-Carlton florist so to speak or the sort of places that exist for a higher economic status, sort of like this wasn't particularly your street, where the concrete is always carefully ^{PA} packed, the stores sell expensive things not particularly useful to myself or the group

with which I am involved. It's always an interesting challenge to walk down a street and just look around. Lots of times I think there are a lot of people who do just that, just want to walk down the street and feel like they were a part of it even though they're really not. And then there are the people who are a part of it and try to make the attempt to get away from their limitations and inhibitions. But this is representative over here - ^{SF} sit on his ~~regal~~ regal chair and you can be an ancient baron or something. There's an area somewhere between this and the country which is more comfortable, for me personally, to walk in.

The nicely done brick houses, or house-type office building, like this Elizabeth Arden job here, -- there's plenty of air conditioning equipment and you know it's very nice and what not, except that you rarely have the opportunity to enjoy it. But then, again, I think the contemporary civilization ~~is~~ has sort of thrust itself into this with laborers' help ^B and welfare fund right next to Eliot, Inc., or Miss Harvey. ^B ^B

Here, though, you get the feeling that there has been an attempt to maintain the fine old "colonial, old Boston" feeling, ^C with lots of contemporary shops which use it as a gimmick rather than feel like it's a pretty functional affair. This one, or Bonwit Teller's over there. ^B Here's a fine old traditional building, well located, and the grass is very green, ^H but it's almost too green for ~~atxkxkxk~~ the inside of a city. At least, to me, I've never seen grass that green. It's almost as if the blades were phid off to stand up ~~and~~ straight and look green.

(Great deal of noise in background) ^{SF - C}

^{For example} / This is a lot more real, in a sense. It's a lot more expressive of how people live - ordinary people, really - how they set things up. Behind the door they don't pile them neatly in rows of 3. Depending on their feelings or how they feel at that moment, they will shove it out or throw it out or set it up neatly.

There is no pretentiousness back here, really. Everything is just as people do it normally. Litter falls ^{Misc} where it falls. The people are ^P more interesting back here. These are a wonderful combination. The little people that make the clothes. Distinguished looking lady in there with the white hair. A real sense of equality there.

Fire escapes have always intrigued me, though. They used to play a great part in the outdoor existence, for me. In the summertime we used to sleep out on them. Although I don't think these were designed for sleeping -- no, these aren't the same variety. They don't have enough room and they're not set up with landings; they don't have the same sort of guard rail -- these have guard rails but not quite the same; you can't play tag on them. This is a fine sight. (litter?) ^{Misc} It's/been here for quite a while, for several days, and the contrast with the neat brick wall right opposite it is interesting. ^B And Mr. Bell's entirely functional approach as to the telephone wires (on the wall). ^{SF} There's a brave little tree over ^M here. It reminds me a lot of the sort of things you see along the tree line on a mountain somewhere -- sort of chopped up and bitten into. ^{Yet} /Even out of their grotesque limbs they sort of sprout out.

This is the common, eh? ^{SP} Is this the Common or Boston Public Gardens. What happened to the lake? ^M (drained) A park has always been for me sort of quiet ground from the battle of the city. As you walk along any of the avenues that lead to Central Park, this one also, ^{some} the battle crowds on and when you finally get to the park all of a sudden things are quiet and it's a different world. Even the wall around it, the chaos is moving. ^N Fat little pigeons! Real little parasites!