

FEEDBACK

You are down on your knees, but you are not praying.
You are holding the hollow body
of your cherrywood Gretsch Tennessean
guitar across your thighs,

and you are pressing the right side of your face
against the black grille of the Fender Bandmaster amp,
whose ruby pilot light glows like a planet in the dark.
You are listening to the last chord that fades into the black

cone of the speaker, which is ridged and grooved
like the walls of Hell, and leaves only a ghost vibration
in your ear. And you are waiting for your friend to lower
the tone arm of the black plastic G.E. stereo

onto the grooves of the record so you can imitate
Blue Cheer, Quicksilver, Jefferson Airplane,
and curve your shoulders over the guitar, like a bird
holding its wings in glide, while your friend

rocks and jerks, gives himself over to the pulse
that drives you deeper and deeper
to the center of your teen-age hearts. You are raw
and born for the distortion that lives beyond your ears

in the darkness, and is too loud with fuzztone
and wah-wah pedal. And each note or chord you strike
in imitation is partially saved, suspended,
as you pull and pump the vibrato's thin blade

and stir the molecules of sound, as your long hair
obscures your faces, and you recede deeper, more separate
into your selves here in this world, on this earth,
in the converted garage with its brown Georgia-Pacific

panelling and green burlap curtains that hang
above the avocado-green carpet.

—MICHAEL COLLIER