

 HarperCollins e-books

Bone Palace Ballet

Charles Bukowski

CHARLES BUKOWSKI
BONE PALACE BALLET

NEW POEMS

 HarperCollins e-books

for Dr. Ellis

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1

AS YOUNG AS WE WERE EVER GOING TO GET

God's man

we were 10 or 11 years old
when we went to see the
priest.

we knocked.

a fat, frumpy woman
answered the door.

“yes?” she asked.

“we want to see the
priest,” one of us
said.

I think it was Frank
who said
it.

“Father,” the woman
turned her head,
“some boys want to
see you.”

“tell them to come
in,” said the
priest.

“follow me,” said the
fat, frumpy lady.

we followed her.

the priest was in his
study.

he was behind his
desk.

he pushed some papers
aside.

“yes, boys?”

the lady left the
room.

“well,” I said.

“well,” said Frank.

“yes, boys, go ahead...”

“well,” said Frank, “we
wondered if God was
really there.”

the Father smiled.

“but, of course, He
is.”

“but where is He?”

I asked.

“haven’t you boys
studied your catechism?
God is Everywhere.”

“oh,” said Frank.

“thank you, Father,
we just wanted to
know,” I said.

“it’s quite all right,
boys, I’m glad you
asked.”

“thank you, Father,”
said Frank.

we both did little
bows, then
turned
and walked out of
the room.

the fat, frumpy lady
was waiting.
she led us down the
hall and to the

door.

we walked along the
street.

“I wonder if he’s
fucking her?” Frank
asked.

I looked around for God,
then answered,
“of course, he isn’t.”

“but what does he do
when he gets
excited?”
asked Frank.

“he probably prays,”
I said.

“it’s not the same
thing,” said Frank.

“he has God,” I said,
“he doesn’t need
that.”

“I think he’s fucking
her,” said Frank.

“oh yeah?”

“yeah.

why don’t we go back
and ask him?”

“you go back and ask
him,” I said, “you’re
the one who’s
curious.”

“I’m afraid to,”
said Frank.

“you’re afraid of God,”
I said.

“well, aren’t you?”
he asked.

“sure.”

we stopped then at a
red light, waiting for
traffic.

neither of us had been
to Mass for
months.

it was boring.

it was more fun

talking to the
priest.

the light changed and
we crossed
over.

not normal

when I was in grammar school

our teacher told us a story

about a sailor

who told the captain,

“the flag? I hope that I *never*

see the flag again!”

“very well,” he was told,

“you will get your

wish!”

and they put him in the

hold of the sailing ship

and kept him there,

sending down his

food

and he died down there

without ever seeing the

flag again.

it was a real horror

story for the other children,

very

effective.