

The Ballad of Matt Sweeney

I

My roommate, Matt Sweeney,
is tall and fat; if he wanted
he could be in a musical.

It's that his High C is really extraordinary,
almost like his gift
Of giving—his gift as a lover, I meant.

His do and his re

And his mi. Matt Sweeney
snores in the room next door.

You should see him when he wakes up,
his bald-spot, his head full of twisted antennae.
You should see his Heineken-green eyes,
his glasses and his intellectual
nose and his runny nose, you should see
his mouth and his teeth and
his tongue and his chest and his heart
(tattooed over his heart), you should see
his belly and his back and his ass
jutting out from just above his underwear.

Only Matt Sweeney looks like Matt Sweeney,
especially in the mornings
(he drinks a six pack of beer in front of the TV
every night, watching a soap opera):
he has the assured air of a triumphant entertainer,
with his head stuffed with marihuana and a happy bon vivant smile;
Matt Sweeney rises like a balloon,
looks at himself, opens his mouth and says,
“Good morning, dude!,” as though he's just gotten back from California.
“Mornin’,” I say back.