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Cannery

Paul Plew
 2022

Cannery Row in Monterey in California is a poem, a stink,
 a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia,
 a dream. Cannery Row is the gathered and scattered tin and
 iron and rust and splintered wood, chipped pavement and
 weedy lots and junk heaps, sardine canneries of corrugated
 iron, honky tonks, restaurants and whore houses, and little
 crowded groceries, and laboratories and flophouses. Its inhab-
 itants are, as the man once said, "whores, pimps, gamblers,
 and sons of bitches," by which he meant Everybody. Had the
 man looked through another peephole he might have said,
 "Saints and angels and martyrs and holy men," and he would
 have meant the same thing.