

the concerts at Lewisohn Stadium, where the planes always seemed to come over at the pianissimo, or in Central Park. He went to the movies — at the all-night movies near Times Square. The pictures were always ancient, horse operas or horror films, and the audience mostly derelicts looking for a cheap place to spend the night. He visited the museums a lot. At the Museum of Modern Art he saw all the old silent films; at the Museum of Natural History, he looked at dinosaurs and odd sorts of rocks; at the Frick, he worshipped Rembrandt; at the Metropolitan, Ali could never tear himself away from the Egyptian rooms. His first painting was a copy of one of the burial walls, and he had studied hieroglyphics. He often said that he might have become an archaeologist had he had money for study. Once, at an auction, he had bought a few scarabs. He sent their impressions to an Egyptologist (Breasted, I believe) to be deciphered. The largest, a speckled brown composition-stone had belonged to a scribe. Ali fixed this into a sort of ring which held the large stone between two fingers and always wore it, though generally he so loathed jewellery that he would never even wear a wrist watch. He did love the sights and smells of New York, but he had a longing for the country. He wrote about the

#### DESIRE IN SPRING

FOR

A sun free  
Of the city's  
Architectures,  
Hills of warm  
Shadows,  
Encompassing  
Beauty of the  
Ceaseless trees,  
Roads of all  
Weights  
Sprawled on  
Their backs  
Watching all  
Slow renewers,  
All in  
Love  
With the  
Country.

