

# My Billionaires

by [Bruce Bawer](#) (October 2023)



*Dead Father*, Alice Neel, 1946

*(Upon learning that a writer friend of mine had been left enough money by a fan to buy an apartment in Seattle.)*

**C.'s Mexique lab** produced a pill  
That made him rich. He loved my quill.  
But when I learned of his *deceso*  
He hadn't left me a single peso.

In letters from his Left Bank flat  
Packed with Picassos, J. gushed that  
My work was like a fine *bijou*.  
He died. I didn't get a sou.

G.'s family owned a merchant fleet.  
He thought my poetry such a feat  
That he had me tutor him by phone—  
Me in Oslo, him alone  
In his office high above the herd  
At Park Avenue and 43rd.  
Yet when it finally was his time,  
I didn't inherit a goddamn dime.

But guess what? When I did go bust  
And rich folks whom I'd come to trust  
Showed me the door, I got a loaner  
Of several hundred thousand kroner  
From an ordinary wage-slave friend.

Moral: you never know who'll lend  
The dough that keeps you off the street  
And helps you get back on your feet.

So be buds with a billionaire!  
But just 'cause he's got tons to spare,  
Be wise, be sensible, beware:  
Don't ever expect to be his heir.

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