

The New World

Mannlicher, a minor state official

The King, had he lived, would have invented the automobile,
With a bud vase in the backseat, a moon roof in the coupe.
Even pickups would come equipped with an opera window,
And roads built for the express purpose of winding gently
into the mountains.

Young people would come to park their open roadsters in the
dark

And look out over the twinkling lights of the valley. They
would make furtive love

On the rich and voluptuous upholstery of their fathers. Songs
Would be written about them, a new form of music engendered,
And some would say it was the real poetry of the new age.
Soon, the entire culture would submit to its world view,
Until even the old and middle-aged were going at it naïvely
In their cars. Think of them now, their skin exposed to the
night air,

A little loose but looking almost new under the simulated
starlight

Of the dashboard. That ringing noise which interrupts them
Is a personal telephone call from the King, conducted
On the outdated princess model he keeps by his bed, and placed
Merely to remind them he is still alive, that he will never die.