

Regret

There was snow
and a gentle whisper of wind tangling my hair
as I walked alone along the mountainside.
My eye was scanning those crying trees
whose blackened, dead bark was half-covered with white.
Then, I noticed, incredulously looked again--

Yet there, among those quivering trees, was a boy.
He stood unthinking and still
as his eyes roved with a sparrow hawk's carefree flight.
His face seemed smooth, unrippled by sorrow or, worse, despair.
With slow meditated steps I approached him,
thinking he might anytime bound, frightened,
and be forever gone.

We walked together that evening--
his hand in mine made me warm.
Sometimes his voice rose thundering in laughter,
then settled again into soft-inflected words
that were like a flute's murmured notes.

I saw him once in that wintertime
and wondered.
Now I know and he, knowing, is dead.

Sans Love, Sans Life

We stood together one morning
among early summery sounds
and carelessly watching that almost unseeable sun
double-imaged on the rippleless lake,
when a sea gull sprang bellowing in fright
then winged into that flaming sea-like sky
until our purblind eyes were finally forbidden.

Now, those rapturous wonders are hidden
and our hands hang separate and lifeless;
no light, a sterile sun white and clouded.
Yet the lake is still calmed as soundless evenings
before quick thunderings of rain
that pass unscaringly as tears of yesterday.

Another Fall

Once more mornings are shadowed less by beckoning warmth
than by chilled whispers of wind--
a wind not screaming and wild,
but caressing, even humble and bending
like a cat's sometimes arched back.

And again there is the splendor of so many leaves--
of reds still throbbing with Spring's passion,
a first kiss's convulsive ecstasy,
of yellows withered with life's bilious despondency--
leaves spirallign to ugly deaths
and smothering, too, those summer-trammeled paths
that lie now silent and untrod, the rain's gutters.

But behind such reckless beauty
Nature conceals an unwinding raucous laughter
as mocking as the vulture's latest play.
For in the corners of Fall's mephitic smile
lurks a sureness that death is transient
and Spring's rebirth, soon;
yet, man sees but lengthening nights
and another wrinkle in his weathered leather brow.

