For Carolyn and Bob in Hope for Andy

Coffee at a country kitchen table
easy talk of friends and young who grow
away, and yet not so

to draw, from troubled deep, design
to soul incipient joy with
Mississippi's glow

of cross no Saviour sanctify
with agony as arcs grow old
and cups are slowly

set as is prescribed in all
to seek within for song.
No tuneless hollow

It recours to the misty afternoon
ambubling contemplation of indifferent
artifacts, and no

resolution in the digging of
a row of zinnias, planting for
the summer flow

of yellow gold against the too
insistant grasp of green that hangs
from heavy limbs as do

the haunted nights of ills too ancient
in their origin for the easy answer
of simple sorrow.

Break earth and claw the rock
for deep and wide must be the bed
where roses grow.