

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 foul 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 tunnel's hollow

no recourse to the misty afternoon  
ambling 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.