When a friend dies
the salmon run no fatter.
The wheat harvest will feed no more bellies.
Nothing is won by endurance
but endurance.
A hunger sucks at the mind
for gone color after the last bronze
chrysanthemum is withered by frost.
A hunger drains the day,
a homely sore gap
after a tooth is pulled,
a red giant gone nova,
an empty place in the sky
sliding down the arch
after Orion in night as wide
as a sleepless staring eye.
When pain and fatigue wrestle
fatigue wins.  The eye shuts.
Then the pain rises again at dawn.
At first you can stare at it.
Then it blinds you.