

Beginnings

This pond is dying
There at the source
You can see it being eaten by the earth
Every year
The leaves tilter down
Look at themselves in the water
And fall through that glass
Every year the grass wades in
And lily pads clutch stiller
Than before

The fish must feel a storm about
To see the surface
So laden with land
Some crazed sort of storm
Without the singing melt of rain
But soft decaying thirst

Yet what would these fish know
Not the ones whose leaps
Scotched the yellow water moon -
These are the tangled brown leaves
That hid their color in the earth

When the green was but a fringe
Bordering to sweeter blue
The whitetails came
To wallow in the shallows
Fawn legs jointy as the grass
And great blue heron
Stepped down from the air
To carve the sunset for flesh.

Then I would swim between two skies
That drank the night
Then paused upon a hill
Would hear the beaver
Splashing in the dark

There are no beaver more
To excite the night
With a slap of the tail
Rippling dreams
Into the pond's flat sleep

Perhaps some deer are left
Too much like man
They would tame their tongues
With city salt

But the great blues
I know they are gone

So should I have been too
Better to sleigh swiftly
Through an elm tree
On a white wintergreen night
Than to stutter at life
With this so domestic poison

But like a foolish October leaf
I fled to the water
Where everything began
The water
Turning into land
And watched all beginnings
Falling to one end

One end

Then hid inside the water
And helped the pond to die