

The Reflection of a Young Writer

(for Richard: 7-14-03 at Squaw Valley)

Not presumptuous
No certainly not presumptuous.
Perhaps perfunctory.
Naturally presbyopic,
Opines the young doctor—
The lens and ciliary body
Desiccate, reclaimed
Both by age and the “life giving”
Rays of brilliant sunlight.

“You are a young writer”, he says.
Kindness concatenated
With the staccato scalpel cuts
Of perceptive genius.
Geniality, congeniality, conviviality
Never a mask, yet still a blind
For the percolating insights of the seer.

“You are a young writer”, he says....and
“She bristles with life;
What a powerful woman,
To have become your teacher,
Yet you lack the words—
A writer needs words, of course.

“Start there, I think.
With a dictionary”, he says.
“Day by day building.
Blocks of the great pyramids
Were moved somehow by men
With lever, pulley and inclined plane.

“You know how to narrate,” he says
“How to be true.
Don’t let them tell you otherwise.
Don’t aim for artifice, metaphor,
Or gilded brocade.
Nor to fly with eagles.
You have your own voice,
Just learn some English.”