***On***

***Light Approached***

***From a***

***Curious Angle***

Words set down with a high intent

May gradually fail to utter

Precisely what you thought they meant:

One meaning shifts into another

As a shaft of light is bent

By the perversity of water.

But that’s a slant analogy

Since light’s already bent by space

Before it plunges into see.

It bears weird shadows on its face,

Its checkered past a mystery—

Yet it brings clear and present grace.

And we accept the puzzling gift

But look the gift-source in the mouth—

Turn rifling glances on the rift

From which it issued: how uncouth!

This sheds no light on light: Its shaft

Will not be bent back into truth.

But flights that shadow forth in error

May breach abruptly into light,

Startle the sense by flaring clearer

As they fail up and out of sight.

Crazed angles, shiftless in a mirror,

Have their inalienable right.