

Peru

He's dead now,  
no doubt about that.  
Some would rather say he passed on.  
He left this material plane  
on his way somewhere.  
Friends and family gather round.  
Some of them mourn.  
He told them not to,  
and some don't,  
because he told them not to.

Well, he doesn't have to deal  
with any of that,  
mourning or not,  
sadness, sense of endings,  
slips out the back door  
(because he's in the habit of doors)  
while everyone gathers around  
his body,  
heads for Peru.

He always wanted to go to Peru.  
The last few years, many times,  
he said he was leaving for Peru,  
too sore to travel much,  
way too sore to go that far,  
but it's easy now,  
catches rides with no trouble.  
People pick him up right away,  
different kinds of people.  
They trust him,  
talk to him,  
listen,  
take him as far as they're going,  
and he catches another ride.

He buys 704 acres,  
money's no problem here,  
10,000 feet elevation,  
straight up from the ocean,  
hires a young couple  
to take care of the place,  
to take care of him,  
just like he said he would  
when he talked about going to Peru.  
She's 37. He's 32. Two kids, 10 and 8.  
He gives the kids a dollar a day to help with chores,  
Her and him,

he gives them a good wage,  
a place to live.  
Gardener, maid, cook, butler, chauffeur, pilot,  
kind of,  
no car, no plane, no phone,  
no television, no electricity,  
no place to go,  
like the loaves and fishes,  
self-renewing,  
nobody thinks about it for the moment,  
and that's all there is, the moment,  
this moment.

The mountain is so steep,  
he gets up a good running start,  
just like he said he would,  
dives clear to the ocean,  
cheats,  
what the heck,  
nobody's watching.  
What's this pause on the way  
for anyway, if not to have fun?  
cheats, drifts forward a ways.  
No mountain  
in this world  
is quite that steep,  
slows before he hits the water,  
splash,  
cheats his way back up to home,  
ten thousand feet,  
sits on the veranda  
in mountain sunshine  
fresh vegetables, fresh fruit  
from the garden.  
He doesn't speak their language,  
and they don't speak his.  
Doesn't matter.  
They communicate enough  
without spoken language,  
trust each other,  
don't need to know anything  
beyond this moment,  
this smile,  
this open place  
in mountain sunshine.

Sometime he'll have to move on  
take the next step.  
He doesn't think about it much.  
Each moment is sufficient  
bites a fresh, ripe strawberry,  
watches the sun

as it massively  
thinks of setting  
beyond the mountains,  
beyond the ocean  
that breaks on black rocks  
below the mountains.