

The Neighbor Lady's Testimony · *Michael C. Smith*

Wasn't he a rubber magnate or such?  
He looked so poor in the ambulance.  
His suit always reminded me  
Of newspapers. And hers

Was no ordinary parasol, officer.  
The other men who've walked beneath its shade—  
I wouldn't care to mention. The butcher,  
For one. She kissed him twice;  
The fringe tipped his hat—  
And her in green stockings.

My, but that parasol was wicked for our street.  
And everywhere she walked  
She left behind kind of a magnolia aftermath.

Directly, she'd not take money from a man.  
He'd have to drop it on the ground,  
And casual as a city employee,  
She'd fetch it up on that silver tip.

No. No ordinary parasol;  
Even at night you'd see it,  
Only closed like a vermilion spider  
Just before a hurricane  
Or frost.