

## A B U S

Consider the world around me:  
Why do I take busses, for example?  
Their routes are complex and arbitrary . . .  
I hold a door open for a young lady.  
The bus pulls away with her hanging on  
And me in the dust. A bit farther down the road  
She jumps off, running a way beside.  
I run too, and soon we are together.

I smile over. We both complain of the heat.  
Soon another bus comes along, and on it  
We talk: "Do you ever drive?" she asks.  
"Yes, I think I'm good, but my friends all think  
I go too fast." "I'm sorry to hear that," she says,  
Truly worried about my dangerous driving . . .

Later, she tells me how, back at some stone wall  
Her lover was shot, no warning given—  
And then, how her love ended:  
The long conversation, the bored telephone call  
That morning—the resentment at last  
Of all the constant intrusions into her life . . .

I find myself winding my watch, slowly,  
Gravely, as she continues to speak:  
She seems to me then, at a distance,  
Deliberately cool and abstract—  
And there is her reaction, I think,  
To whatever I might have accidentally  
Said or done.

But her anger, driven  
By the dying out of love, fails,  
Leaving only passion—an emotion which,  
Arrived at finally in her words,  
Embarrasses us both, makes us pause . . .

Now I don't want to add to the number  
Of things I already have to contend with:  
It's difficult enough with just the toll  
From the fear she causes every few minutes  
When we talk together. And the cost is  
Tremendous: just look at what anger has done!

But now she is almost happy—  
She will go back to live with her father  
Over the store on the main street in town.  
And I am looking, slowly, deliberately,  
Out of the window again: the bus is running  
Between the dark houses extremely, terribly close.