

## Two, Remembered · *Constance Carrier*

They stand in the sun by the pool,  
beautiful, warmed by a light  
like some god's benison lying  
golden upon them.

What god,  
what god would devise their dying? —

one of them beaten and knifed  
in a casual holdup, left  
to die on the sill of the year;  
one shaven-headed and blind,  
the tumor thrusting to flower  
in bone its rage would devour,  
the flesh transparent, the mind  
to the last moment clear.

Was a reckoning fixed from the first,  
had Nemesis marked them out  
to punish excess with excess?  
Could they, from fear of the night,  
have summoned their own nightmare,  
met the reprisal they forced?  
I remember the shadows there,  
beyond the circle of sun  
where they stood like two who invite  
the bolt of the flung spear.

Their sun has been quenched, has set.  
Horror does not grow less;  
it carves on the mind, like stone,  
the scenes we fight to forget.  
We can do nothing now  
to pay them a final grace  
but keep their image alive,  
held like an amulet  
to show us one side of the coin  
whose other face is despair.