***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.