

he is something special now,  
When day turns into night  
he holds the power,  
    ring ting rin-a-jing  
        of the keys on a ring  
        on a chain  
        on a clip  
        on a trouser waist  
        on a leather belt.

old mr. cain

old mr. cain,  
i met you in your wizened days,  
dry as a stalk of marsh grass  
in the winter, brittle and thin,  
humming over a special framing job  
up in the shop.  
you twinkled when you told  
how you tripped the boy  
who raced you to get that job  
some sixty-five years or more  
before our time.  
you've seen so many others  
come and go — outlasting  
and outwitting them  
with your piercing eyes  
and bird-twitter patter of nonsense.  
you were a lesson to me,  
many lessons taught silently  
in a school you did not know i attended.  
your endurance amazed us,  
for fifteen years you did not  
speak a word to the other framer there  
over a drafty window feud.  
andy wyeth brought you apples every fall.  
your pale cheeks bloomed with joy,  
your fingers never forgot to be nimble.

there was a legend that said  
you would not leave there voluntarily,  
that you would be carried out,  
and — you were.

lacemakers

we are the lacemakers  
more aware of the shapes of the holes,  
making of what is not there  
that which is most beautiful.  
we are the lacemakers  
taking the least and  
making from it the most.  
arachne challenging minerva,  
web spinners, industrious little spiders  
weaving from essence a substance  
that in turn becomes essence.  
making of what is not there  
the most important.  
we are the lacemakers  
tatting and tying, shuttling and knotting,  
entangling and ensnaring,  
trappers of nothing,  
trappers of everything,  
shapers of holes — of openings,  
of exits and entrances.  
we are the entrances and exits,  
the weavers of veils,  
the wearers of veils,  
the tearers of veils,  
the menders of veils,  
the reweavers of emptiness.  
tenders of the spaces between  
the gossamer threads.  
we are the lacemakers.