

Lines To My Father

(On the Death of my Father; Gary, Indiana, outside his Mosque, 1967)

My Father is watching over his mosque, silently
he hovers now, praying
my Father is sitting on the step watching
holding his chest where the bullet entered his prayer
holding on, the maple trees blurring in his eyes
he cannot rise, he is praying as his blood comes,
my Father is planting maples beside his mosque
digging each hole
carefully, patiently, knowing the trees will grow
he is watering the grass outside his mosque at 3 a.m.,
his work is done; now my Father covers the grass with
love.

My Father is moving East, to Lebanon, eating kib'bee, his
mother offering him grapes and shade,
he is walking in the mountains, drinking water;
my Father is sitting on a park bench beside me
taking the air, watching my children in the grass,
he is talking of water,
trying to rest,
but he must go his mosque waiting.
my Father, dreaming of water when wakened
when I found him had only blood in his mouth.