

## ***THE END***

Something quit in the predawn hour,  
a great sussurance beneath the surface.

A wanting to die, to be washed  
and empty of the scribblings  
and the history. We didn't know  
how to know. We never stood  
hungry in the middle of the plains,  
the invisibly dark gasses borne  
out of the subterranean cannisters,  
passing over it all like a slow song  
we listened to before we'd heard  
rock-and-roll and danced furiously.  
It was an old-fashioned song sung  
in a lost language, the good  
interpreter lost over the border, his wife  
already in black. We took more  
than the food offered us, the fast  
transparent whispers of the hunger strikers  
just an empty joke. Out of the ashes  
a body signifying the lord,  
clothed with the white heat  
of its own surety, angry, imprisoned  
by an expanding ecstatic universe,  
but burning like a cartoon hero  
back from the dead, rife with wit  
and a good guy's charm. Even he  
failed. And so in the umbrella  
of the cartoon darkness, another figure  
unsettled in the mud, stripping  
the last vestments from its body,  
volcanic, massive, pre-verbal, slathered  
in root-stuff and fool's gold, lifting  
a radium coin from the forest floor-  
And still we didn't get it. And  
like a dog stupid with need, we drooled  
and panted, did tricks in the hideous dirt  
for the next master, until we were sent  
into the cold night to breathe out  
our last dreams under the frigid,  
inordinate moon, under  
the nervous, angelic stars.