

Arleen's labor day

'o do thou direct the work of our hands'

arleen labored gently
to achieve death

as intently as she lived
to birth those children
those ideas
that beauty
that wonder

as directly as if
god had ordered
her to do these things
in person although
acting within the
medium of uncertainty

as humbly as if
she had accepted
from the beginning
that the crooked path
shows the forest's best

as triumphantly
as any home-bound
wayfaring pilgrim
who scents the
kitchen and the garden
of ancestral rest

that long breath --
unbroken string of sussuration
sustained since josie dunn
saved the twins from
helpless inanition
one far spring ago --
now meditates upon itself
where no convent needs remind
no clan holds sway
but our lord god sets out
the humble table of our becoming

Jamie Yeager, September 2006