

## *The Third Ear*

Not to judge—but to understand  
Who knows the inner life of others  
private pains  
secret sufferings  
clandestine ambitions.

Not to judge—but to understand  
beneath the coolness  
an interior self  
    too bashful to speak aloud of love  
    too frightened to embrace the other with  
    both arms.

Judgment is simple, crude, mechanical  
Understanding complex, subtle, personal  
Judgment is external  
    a slavish following of the letter of the  
    law  
Understanding reads between the lines  
Uncovering unadmitted dreams.

We would not be judged by the eye of others  
    faults picked apart  
    failings magnified.

We would not be heard  
    with the third ear  
    open to the muted sobs.

An ear attentive to the quiet grace  
    buried in the surface noise of activity.

Place an ear to the soul  
    to the spirit that is joined  
    to an understanding God.