

The Old World Violinist

– *In Honor of Abram Shtern*

The violinist is breathing
his breakfast against the big table.

Pre-dawn he sits
with that business desk against his chest
opening its drawers and rolodex.

The stiff flaming branch
shivers above the stove.

He holds the coffin of an old friend
and says those things
that make life worthwhile.

He doesn't use his suspenders
or warmed up hands to play the violin.
He forgot his hands were cold.
It is your world he rubs under his chin.

In the tarnished mirror,
his silver silhouette is dark as tin.

The bow moves like a border collie,
slow and eager apace,
studded with quick foot fall.

But the gathering place is quiet.
By still waters and green pastures
we see Heaven's eyelashes open.