An Autumn Leaf

I stepped inside my house and I could see
A messenger relaxing on the floor:
A maple leaf was waiting there for me.
I wondered how it slipped inside my door.

I tried to sweep it forth. Without a doubt,
It clung there with a mind that it would stay.
As if determined not to be cast out,
Before I gathered what it had to say.

But scarcely had I tossed it to its fate,
I thought of what it meant. But my reply,
Although it must have been a little late,
Could only be summed up within a sigh.

A Prayer

As the daffodil
Does from the mould,
May my phrases
Drain gold.

May my lines,
As buttercups do,
Syphon up
A vivid hue.

May my words, As they ply, Like roses, soak up Richest dye.

Four Little Prayers After a Heart-Attack

95. I not quite in a panic fight for breath, and then all night in detail, rib by rib, exquisitely my muscles pick

themselves apart, until at dawn
I sink exhausted down.
No doubt, Lord, though I do not see,
that this is useful to me.

96. A breeze of the evening and a thrush twittering in the sudden quiet.

My pulse has begun to beat

slower at last.
A long freight train is rumbling past,
I wanly wave and cheerfully
the engineer toots at me.

97. Since anyway I have been struck and I must stop all work,
I am lucky not to be in New York but here where I can slowly walk

from the orange lilies to the purple mallows and putter among the green tomatoes and crawl, with help, down the small hill to the river flowing at its own sweet will.