for that sort of thing.
but he somehow found the time to also
be a leader of the faculty and a defender
of the rights of underdogs off-campus
as well as on.

in the academic senate, i have always
glanced his way before raising my voice
yea or nay.

he looks fine, but in a year or two
he'll be dead.

i'm not a religious person. the only
immortality in which i firmly believe
is that we live on in those who have
learned from us. it's not a new
insight. it's the point, i suppose,
of to the lighthouse and of the whole
jewish religion.

i've learned from my colleague, many have, and if anyone he stood up to
thinks that he or she will have
an easier time of it from now on,

may they think twice.

HE WAS ALSO MODEST, INTELLIGENT, GENEROUS AND,
WORST OF ALL, LIKEABLE

i picked up my mail at school today
for the first time since the winter holidays began
and it was a good day:

2 poems in one little magazine;
2 poems in another;
a couple of poems accepted by a third place;
and a review published in an academic journal.

i don't have many days like that.

the only problem is
i was in the same graduate school
at the same time as the novelist, brian garfield,
best known perhaps for death wish and hopscotch,
and on one not particularly noteworthy saturday
he had six books accepted for publication.
he already, at twenty-four,
had twenty-four volumes in print.
we corresponded for a year or two
and then i fell hopelessly behind,
not being able to read
as fast as he could write.

HENRIETTA JAMES

speaking to my daughter
of some people we both know,
i say, "i can't really make a judgment
since i only have access to
one side of the story,"

and she says, "the only thing worse
than knowing one side of a story
is knowing both."

SHE SMELLS A RAT

she is angry because i am forty-five minutes late
and because i have been at the same type
of social gathering as the one at which
she and i first met.
she is so suspicious that,
even after my reassurances,
she is unresponsive in bed
and finally admits,
"you don't smell the same."

after this ridiculous admission, of course,
she is terribly embarrassed,
confesses paranoia,
resumes our lovemaking passionately.

i did, as a matter of fact,
wake one attractive woman to her car.
we did discuss some possibilities.
but we didn't do anything
that would have altered my aroma.

so my (as dr. johnson would have it) stink
must have been
entirely in her
imagination.