

THE SICKNESS

if  
one night  
I write  
what I consider to  
be  
5 or 6 good poems  
then I begin  
to worry:

suppose the house  
burns down?

I'm not worried  
about  
the house  
I'm worried  
about  
those 5 or 6  
poems  
burning  
up

or

an x-girlfriend  
getting in  
here  
while I'm away  
and stealing or  
destroying  
the poems.

after writing  
5 or 6 poems  
I am fairly  
drunk  
and  
I sit  
having a few  
more  
drinks  
while deciding  
where to hide  
the poems.

sometimes I  
hide the poems  
while  
thinking about  
hiding  
them  
and when I

decide to  
hide them  
I can't find  
them ...

then  
begins the  
search

and this  
whole room is  
a mass of  
papers  
anyhow

and

I'm very clever  
at  
hiding poems  
perhaps more  
clever than I  
am  
in  
writing  
them.

so  
then  
I find them  
have another  
drink

hide them  
again

forget it  
then  
go  
to sleep ...

to awaken in  
late morning  
to remember  
the poems  
and  
begin the  
search  
again ...

usually only a  
ten or fifteen  
minute  
period of

agony

to find  
them  
and read  
them  
and then  
not like them  
very much

but you know  
after all  
that  
work

all that  
drinking  
hiding  
searching  
finding

I decide  
it's only  
fair  
to send  
them  
out  
as a  
record of  
my  
travail

which  
if  
accepted  
will appear in  
a little  
magazine  
circulation  
between  
100 and  
750

a year and  
one half  
later

maybe

it's  
worth  
it.