

1963

Classical Elegy

Franklin M. Dickey

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BERTHA HINMAN

AUTUMNAL

When leaves hang drab as camouflage
 Left dangling from a late and earthly war
 It is not frost alone; and more than twilight,
 Shrinking afternoon shuttles the swallows,
 Flashing steel, from zone to zone
 In a relentless chemistry of flight.
 Again the torrents of the equinox
 Rustle a year's debris to beige
 Rivers stiff with alluvium.
 Dim in a city's aureole,
 The patterned stars turn and return
 Again. There's Betelgeuse the same;
 There's Aldebaran in the Bull;
 And there Andromeda is chained.

FRANKLIN M. DICKEY

LESSON

(Presbyterian Hospital, Albuquerque, 1963)

A certain strength here
 Not ambitious but
 Staying.
 The cliff hangs from the hawks'
 Grasp
 The terraced mesa
 From men's, the
 Holding
 Of generations, the
 Staying
 Within gifts
 Within limits.

FRANKLIN M. DICKEY

CLASSICAL ELEGY

She is dying
 Quietly
 Incoherently
 And with tears,
 Hers and ours,
 For she knows.
 Every so often in the day or night
 She cries out
 "Love Me!"
 Lie gently on her, Earth—
 No!