

## *When All Has Been Given*

and all taken  
(and both have been taker and giver)  
time's womb is the room they wake in;  
what bauble will it deliver?  
Have charged poles, pronged and plussed,  
uniting themselves in desire,  
lost Venus' cross, Mars' arrow of lust:  
smoke rings from the Phoenix fire?  
Or popped to birth Donne's hemispheres?  
whose torrid equators might  
merge in the flux of flea-bitten years  
if not cooled by equilibrious sneers  
congealing by polar night  
to thicken a skin around captive fire  
and drive an axis through poles of desire.

—Edward Hart