

REDEMPTION OF THE FIELD AT BROADWAY AND 88th

Cousin, this is my ancestral square.

My hapless forefathers tilled it
from the time of the good judges.

You have been a worthy caretaker,
indeed a fine custodian
protecting the soil with this slab of cement
and dressing it with your coat and bags —

yea, you have erected a shelter on this land,
a sukkah of cardboard grapefruit cartons.

But though you have tended it well,
I have returned from my sojourn in the West
and I will redeem this plot again for my use.
Do not protest and risk the wrath of this bandage.
Fear not for a fair price. I've got a slew of nickels.

I will claim my right of inheritance,
my square of concrete, my little kingdom.
And I will build a house to house my house.
See, I have seed and a child's spork
to till the dormant ground.

There will be zucchini on the roadway.
This field will bloom again.