

Richard Eberhart

(1904-2005)

Worldly Failure (1960)

I looked into the eyes of Robert Frost  
Once, and they were unnaturally deep.  
Set far back in the skull, as far back in the earth.  
An oblique glance made them look even deeper.

He stood inside the door on Brewster Street,  
Looking out. I proffered him an invitation.  
We went on talking for an hour and a half.  
To accept or not to accept was his question.

Whether he wanted to meet another poet;  
He erred in sensing some intangible slight.  
Hard for him to make a democratic leap.  
To be a natural poet you have to be unnaturally deep.

While he was talking he was looking out,  
But stayed in, sagacity better indoors.  
He became a metaphor for inner devastation,  
Too scared to accept my invitation.