

# One old and one new

*by Gary Hardaway*

## **Dinner Party**

The coffee tastes slightly  
of the soap with which  
the carafe was washed

but is delicious  
served as it is  
among these friends.

## **Suppression**

My beard abrades the inner lining of  
my mask. The frayed filaments  
tickle my chin and irritate my nostrils,  
encouraging a sneeze which,

in less troubled and troubling times,  
would elicit blessings instead  
of the disgusted curses which now  
would come as particulates and panic  
spread throughout this supermarket.

I resist. The sneeze subsides  
and I'm allowed to keep my slow  
purview of what's on offer  
this otherwise lovely late September day.

