

## Little Caesar on TV

Mother of mercy  
is this the end of Rico?  
or does the pulse of desire  
which lifted him up keep racing  
through rain-slick streets  
like a speeding roadster,  
the fates on its tail in hot pursuit.  
Flaherty, you bastard,  
how easy it is for you to sneer  
at ambition extinguished,  
you whose only hopes revolve  
around slipping the cuffs  
on wrists of men with clearer sight,  
squeezing the juice from fingers  
that have molded life in all  
its uncertainty and rigor,  
that have taken chances.

He wound up in the gutter  
that he came from, just as you told  
the scribblers he would, just  
the way your divine plan dictated  
he should, but not because  
of any blur in his vision,  
any failing of his stout heart—  
the way you would have had it—  
but because of the fundamental  
flaw in his logic: sure, be big,  
the heavens are vast, stars beyond  
counting and man is puny unless  
he dares to stand on tiptoe  
and push his hand beyond his reach.  
Sure, Rico, be a big shot,  
the way the egg stains on your plate  
predict, but don't you dare  
to spit on the dance,  
to step on the toes of the dancer.

DAVE MARGOSHES