

Adagio

by Gary Hardaway

Barber's Adagio again. By means
studied but still mysterious,
it divines each sorrow,
draws them all together
as if into a chalice crystalline and clear,
then shatters and spills everything
as ascending pressure stops
and sudden silence swallows
and returns us, purified,
as themes are quietly reprised.
Can the calm this time
give us space to step deliberately
toward peace or something like it?
or must we turn again (and again)
to an orchestra stripped of wind and drum?

