

"The Red Stairway"
Ben Shahn



Shattered -

The wall symbolized is the force
of the Friend beyond power reclaimed
as it fled.

To climb the two steps note the cost:
The vision that's cast in the foam
of support but the crutch;
A stairway that limits ascent,
Though it's red,
Not to reach but the fall
In revealed from a frothing repeal;
In the clutch of the floating white wave
The air of the good yielded not;
The deepest is charged beyond worth
In the Friend that is carried as dead
Filed with stones.

Shattered -

The hopes of a man must sustain
What is buried in love a recast,
How it's fled.

Generations it takes to rebuild.