

## I Pledge Allegiance to Rebellion

I pay attention to revolts.

They clear the air.

They show  
that not accepting what is  
unacceptable is always possible.

Even a failed resistance  
seems to me much nobler  
than surrendering.

It's not  
a question of defeat or triumph.  
Resisters rarely win,  
but, win or lose, they stay  
in mind.

They last.

After  
his stroke my father would not  
accept his condition.

Refusal  
let him feel complete and still  
in charge.

He died, refusing.  
Emanuel Goldenberg retained  
the G in his stage name  
so that the world would know  
that Edward G. Robinson  
was proudly and defiantly a Jew.

Informed that his leukemia  
was lethal, Edward Said  
rebelled for eleven years  
by authoring books he never  
would have written otherwise...

Refusal arms us to contend  
with issues grave or small.

They could be ultimate as death  
or common as weeding a garden,  
shoveling driveway snow

or shaving.

I leave all further  
talk of consequence, rewards  
or deeper meanings to the gods.

I only know that I feel  
most myself when I say no  
to what deserves a no  
exactly when the no is needed.

To those obsessed with outcomes,  
I suggest what matters first  
and always is the choice– the stance.