

## Home Improvement

they all tell me  
these onlookers whose comments I do not invite  
that it would have been easier  
y mucho más barato  
if I would have torn down the old house  
si la hubiera arrasado

what they don't realize  
these people who must say something  
is that I have built this house as I have built my life  
by small and clumsy additions, a few major undertakings  
much reflection and some consideration  
—though not always useful—  
and many costly mistakes

they don't understand  
these people  
that we can never begin again  
as we once began  
that there is no starting over  
que no se puede empezar de nuevo

they don't understand  
that we build our lives by accretion  
that our past is the foundation  
we lay with our living

and that the errors and expense of our experience  
are ours alone to live with