

# tiny i

## I

there is a vietnam and a middle east  
a watts and a venerable south  
there is a russia and a china  
a degaulle and a johnson  
an assassin and a saint

somehow these seep unrest down  
to the somewhere i am  
the sometime gulf  
the catch-all flood for every wave and tide  
inundated  
it is i who read and am read to  
talked to, talked of  
talked up even  
but it's all talk where i am concerned  
(except for the sometimes when i am used)

i am for some reason or other  
the subject of it all—  
subjected is more like it.

where am i or ought i?

## II

i am all i am is  
a tiny i  
the way i feel  
frustrated  
because of all about  
so much so large so big so impossible  
i want to be honest about why i stand here  
so incredibly frustrated at least

(“Every massive problem demands a massive solution.”)

## III

i grow a beard or i shave real clean  
and wear a tie or i make a scene  
but it's all because  
i don't want to be  
tiny i

would i be so frustrated if i knew what human nature  
was about really  
that it's not about countries, or wars, or races,  
or personalities even  
but it's about other tiny i's  
like myself

i say "amen" or i mouth a shriek  
and boo the boss or i maim his pickets  
but it's all because  
i don't want to be  
tiny i

tiny i's do not see how infinitely large the picture of  
this universe must be to escape being titled "In Vain"

tiny i  
is when you realize  
you're living in the twentieth century  
and can do nothing about it.

—*Timothy Mahoney, O.P.*