*JOHN CIARDI*

*SUBURBAN*

Yesterday Mrs. Friar phoned."Mr. Ciardi,   
how do you do?" she said. "I am sorry to say   
this isn't exactly a social call. The fact is   
your dog has just deposited-forgive me-   
a large repulsive object in my petunias."   
  
I thought to ask, "Have you checked the rectal grooving   
for a positive I.D.?" My dog, as it happened,   
was in Vermont with my son, who had gone fishing-   
if that's what one does with a girl, two cases of beer,   
and a borrowed camper. I guessed I'd get no trout.   
  
But why lose out on organic gold for a wise crack   
"Yes, Mrs. Friar," l said, "I understand."   
"Most kind of you," she said. "Not at all," I said.   
I went with a spade. She pointed, looking away.   
"I always have loved dogs," she said, "but really!"   
  
I scooped it up and bowed. "The animal of it.   
I hope this hasn't upset you, Mrs. Friar."   
"Not really," she said, "but really!" I bore the turd   
across the line to my own petunias   
and buried it till the glorious resurrection   
  
when even these suburbs shall give up their dead.