

ABOUT FOUNTAINS

Suddenly I know a lot about fountains,
those incomprehensible trees of glass.
I could talk now as of my own tears,
which I, gripped by such fantastic dreaming,
spilled once and then somehow forgot.

Could I forget that the heavens reach hands
toward many things and into this commotion?
Did I not always see unrivaled greatness
in the ascent of old parks before the soft
expectant evenings—in pale chants
arising out of unknown girls
and overflowing out of the melody
and becoming real, and as if they must be
mirrored in the opened ponds?

I must only remind myself of all
that happened both with fountains and with me,—
then I feel also the weight of the descent,
in which I saw again the waters:
and know of branches that bent downwards,
of voices that burned with small flames,
of ponds that, feeble-minded and shunted off,
repeated endlessly their sharp-edged banks;
of evening skies, which from charred western forests
stepped back totally bewildered,
arched differently, darkened, and acted
as though this were not the world they had envisioned . . .

Could I forget that star flanking star grows hard
and shuts itself against its neighbor globe?
That the worlds in space only recognize each other
as if through tears?—Perhaps we are *above*,

woven into the skies of other beings
who gaze toward us at evening. Perhaps their
poets praise us. Perhaps some of them
pray up toward us. Perhaps we are the aim
of strange curses that never reach us,
neighbors of a god whom they envision
in our heights when they weep alone,
whom they believe in and whom they lose,
and whose image, like a gleam from their
seeking lamps, fleeting and then gone,
passes over our scattered faces . . .