

THE PANTHER

In the Jardin des Plantes, Paris

His gaze has grown so tired from the bars
passing, it can't hold anything anymore.
It is as if there were a thousand bars
and behind a thousand bars nothing.

The soft gait of powerful supple strides,
which turns in the smallest of all circles,
is like a dance of strength around a center
where an imperious will stands stunned.

Only at times the curtain of the pupils
silently opens—. Then an image enters,
passes through the taut stillness of the limbs—
and in the heart ceases to be.

THE PANTHER

His vision, from the constantly passing bars
has grown so weary that it cannot hold
anything else. It seems to him there are
a thousand bars; and behind the bars, no world.

As he paces in cramped circles, over and over,
the movement of his powerful soft strides
is like a ritual dance around a corner
in which a mighty will stands paralyzed.

Only at times, the curtain of the pupils
lifts, quietly—. An image centers in,
rushes down through the tensed, arrested muscles,
plunges into the heart and is gone.