No one but me by the fire, 
my hands burning 
red in the palms while 
the night wind carries 
everything away outside.

All this petty worry 
while the great cloak 
of the sky grows dark 
and intense 
‘round every living thing.

What is precious 
inside us does not 
care to be known 
by the mind 
in ways that diminish 
its presence.

What we strive for 
in perfection 
is not what turns us 
into the lit angel 
we desire, 

what disturbs 
and then nourishes 
has everything 
we need.

What we hate 
in ourselves 
is what we cannot know 
in ourselves but 
what is true to the pattern 
does not need 
to be explained.

Inside everyone 
is a great shout of joy 
waiting to be born.
Even with summer 
so far off
I feel it grown in me
now and ready
to arrive in the world.

All those years
listening to those
who had
nothing to say.

All those years
forgetting
how everything
has its own voice
to make
itself heard.

All those years
forgetting
how easily
you can belong
to everything
simply by listening.

And the slow
difficulty
of remembering
how everything
is born from
an opposite
and miraculous
otherness.

Silence and winter
have led m to that
otherness.

So let this winter
of listening
be enough
for the new life
I must call my own.
Every sound
has a home
from which it has come
to us
and a door
through which it is going
again,
out into the world
to make another home.

We speak
only with the voices
of those
we can hear ourselves
and the body has a voice
only for that portion
of the body of the world
it has learned to perceive.

It becomes
a world itself
by listening
hard
for the way
it belongs.

There it can
learn
how it
must be
and what
it must do.

And
here
in the tumult
of the night
I hear the walnut
above the child’s swing
swaying
its dark limbs
in the wind
and the rain now
come to
beat against my window
and somewhere
in this cold night
of wind and stars
the first whispered
opening of
those hidden
and invisible springs
that uncoil
in the still summer air
each yet
to be imagined
rose.