

how could you choose this life, & how,
among friends, deny kindness? You keep your eye
at death—or death's abyss;
you never choose to drop.

Sometimes you refuse to put up with yourself
but you go on talking,
thinking, maneuvering
over the dark & chartless waters
& under mysterious orders not to come in.

THOUGH I LONG TO BE NO ONE

I passed for two nights
& days, alone,
on a train.

Whatever I do
I am always leaving.
Whoever's face I lay my own along,
the cheek bones bruised & rose.

Faces of friends,
of women;
the elongated face of my third wife, aged
& concerned about my house . . .

Nightly I carry them forward in sleep,
though I long to be no one.

The wheels of iron pass
over these rails
& boards above water.
Over the bodies of my constant departure
into my constant longing.