

Paul Guest

THE INTRUSION OF OVID

Brother Ovid, my classical leanings run thin
tonight, alone with weepy music and food
less interesting than the politics of mollusks.

Catullus and his exploits in the front yard
with the maid and one of his pale girlfriends
puts me to shame, so it's to you I turn

for good company. It helps that you're dead.
Your book shuts without protest
unlike my front door or someone's mouth

when I'm tired of intrusion. The stars
blur the perfect darkness of the night.
The moon muddies the shore where I go

to think of its distant urgings. The crickets
themselves should learn to dream
in silence, without singing to the large world

of loneliness. You, yourself, trample
the sadness I lushly tend like a garden
and tell me to come in from the rain,

to laugh while I can, to get more sleep,
good advices all, and at this window
in which is framed the world that's mine

and once was yours, I'm inclined to listen,
to put you down and shut my eyes
because pain is ancient, and therefore classic,

as you are and I am not.