

Facing Midnight

Only what is left is beautiful, they say,
or what fades, alone is precious.
Whose is that cold footstep, anyway,
which seeks me at this hour
to force me to such a thought?

The windows of night are open, illuminations
at the secret meeting place of death and life.
Another day sits on the edge of the chair
calculating the gain and loss of virtuous fear,
that is the order late at night.

Fear is perhaps
a quality of enduring flesh.
The skull has opened all the doors
facing a moonless midnight with a dog barking.

My hands are grasping
the structure of the countless broken stars,
my eyes watch an island which is not on a map
and a time which is not in history,
and ears alert for the voice of a watcher
hear the foggy silence of the flowing wind.

Lips are closed,
while the leaves fall
at the foot of a wall.

Resisting the weight of silence
which has come through tears,
drop by drop, or streak by streak,
the lamplight grows under my skin
still facing midnight.

Translated by the author