

For Heinrich Böll

SPINNEY,
hawk-grey,
the cricket light of noon dryness,
behind them, the house,
built on a vein of water.

Water,
hidden,
in sandy wilderness,
you flowed into the thirst of language,
you attracted lightning.

At the entrance to earth,
says a voice, where stones
and roots bolt the door,
the grubbed-up bones of Job
have turned to sand, there still
his bowl of rain water stands.

translated by
Michael Hamburger