

what she is thinking about.
She can't know I'm here
and wouldn't care if she did.
She sits there as I sit here.
And then she laughs.
Startled, I turn back
into the room. She watches me
from the bed, smiling gently—
at what, I wonder.
Her cigarette is a gray ash that drops
into the white air of the sheets.

Distant Faces / Daniel Halpern

Sometimes at night
I go out to the terrace
lit by red neon
that vibrates the still air.
I lie down on bricks
whose coolness calms me
and remember those who have left
for cities in the west,
or the midwest,
or for nowhere at all.
After a little I go back in,
and in sleep call back
those familiar faces.
Or else I remain on the bricks
and press to my body
the coolness that keeps
those who have left me
so distant, so far away.