

For without this reverence we can scarcely be committed to the value of being; it is the secret of what Pasternak called “the talent for life.” Tomlinson is certainly out of season to recall us to the life of the moment conceived as an end in itself; and yet it is just this unseasonableness that puts him in harmony with what is lasting in our relations with the world.

Charles Tomlinson

Three Bagatelles

THE NIGHT - TRAIN

composed
solely of carbon and soot-roses
freighted tight
with a million
miniscule statuettes
of La Notte (Night)
stumbles on
between unlit halts
till daylight begins
to bleed its jet
windows white, and the night-
train softly
discomposes, rose
on soot-rose,
to become—white
white white—
the snow-plough
that refuses to go.

AT SANT' ANTIMO

Flanking the place,
a cypress
stretches itself, its surface
working as the wind
travels it in a continual
breathing, an underwater
floating of foliage
upwards, till
compact and wavering
it flexes a sinuous
tip that chases
its own shadow
to and fro
across the still
stone tower.

P O E M

space
window
that looks into itself

a facing
both and
every way

colon
between green apple:
and vase of green

invisible
bed and breath
ebb and air-flow

below an unflawed
iridescence
of spiderweb