

## Love-life

John Wieners

Chains are a terrible thing to wear,  
Unless of one's own making,  
and even terrible to bear.

More fierce the cunning of the mind  
That invents its own breaking  
To seek and then resort to blind  
Oh, who's choosing this kind—

Hopeful burden to share  
Without recourse to party or to fair.

How I hope release might ease the pair.  
But as it is, I see no desert  
Of challenge or care; to go on this way

Unsatisfied and near the raking.  
Naked to love's own sword or sorry speech  
Each to each unto death sooth the caking.  
Perhaps take the partner by force

But on what course to proceed, rhymeless  
Confined and continuing the commitment

By one's words condemned  
To love the person, no matter what slaking  
Or taking of curse off by proximity.

Still that anger hurts, that agony apart.  
How to slake this burden together.

Though the gift has gone.  
The handwriting changed.  
And the mind broken in two.  
By such aimless arrow.

Of lust, of must  
Of pest love lingered.