

A Letter from Barbara

I asked you to tell me what I owe,
What you lost for my not being near you,
The fine I should pay for the shared air I stole,
The rent for the angry words I took for myself from us two.

You told me I will make right by being a distant good
For some people we do not know,
For children who are eaten by soldier machines,
For mothers tortured back to every yesterday.
I will pay you by listening to screams for words I took away,
I will apologize to the dying
For ignorant nights I spent walking by myself
Under the illusions of imaginary rainbows,
For the days when I was alone writing with my toes
In the sand at the edge of the sea of ourselves
That no human wind or weather can control.