O trees of life, when does your winter come?
We are not whole, not certain like the birds
when they migrate. Suddenly, out of season,
we fling ourselves too late upon the winds
and fall like leaves on some indifferent pond.
Our minds hold bloom and withering at once.
And somewhere lions still stalk about and know
no impotence through their days of lordship.

But we, each time we mean one thing completely
must also feel the other. Enmity
is closest to us. Do not lovers always
strike barriers in each other, where they promised
to give the other space to hunt and shelter?

Somewhere, for the impression of a moment,
is made a base of opposition, slowly,
so that we see it - for we are not
treated with subtlety. We do not know
the contour of emotion, just the force
that shapes it from outside.
Who has not sat in fear before the curtain of his own heart? It opens, with the scenery set for farewells, hard to mistake: the well-known garden swaying on its painted flats.

Then came the Dancer. Not him! Enough! For all his suppleness, he is disguised, and when he takes it off he is a bourgeois and enters his apartment through the kitchen. I reject all these half-filled masks; I'd rather the puppet. It is full. I will endure the skin, the wire and its face that only looks outwards. Here! I'm here before the stage. Even if the lamps go out, if I am told there is no more, even if from the curtains nothingness blows towards me in the grey draught; if of my silent forebears no one sits with me here, no woman, no not even the boy from childhood with the brown wall-eye - -: I will remain. I can still be an audience.

Am I not right? You, for whom life about me tasted so bitter, Father, having me on your tongue, the first cloudy infusion of what I was, must be - you, always tasting over again my being there, forced to take notice of the aftertaste of my quite alien future - - you tested my cunning, veiled glance upwards. You, Father, who since you are dead, often, in all my hope with in me are afraid and feel serene as well, feel all the great serenity that the dead have, but give this up for my small bit of fate - - Father, am I not right? And you, who once loved me for the small love
that I began towards you, but then changed, 
always broke off because I saw the clear 
space in your visage, in the time I loved it, 
turn into heaven’s vastness in which you 
no longer were .. Tell me, am I not right, 
if I still feel I must wait here before 
the puppet theatre, no: must gaze at it 
with such whole concentration, that to balance 
my gaze at last an angel has to come 
to act upon the stage and animate 
the figures: angel and puppet, then at last 
a play’s performed. Then all things come together 
that we divide simply by being there. 
Then our several seasons can combine 
to make up the whole ring of transformations. 
If that can be, the angel plays above us ..

But surely the dying have some intimation 
how full of pretexts all our makings are. 
Everything is not itself. Oh hours 
in childhood, when each shape we knew had more 
than just the past behind it and ahead 
of us was nothing called the future. Of course 
we were growing, sometimes couldn’t wait 
to be grown up, half out of kindness for 
all those who had nothing but their adulthood. 
And yet we were, as we walked all alone 
the no-man’s-land between the world and playthings, 
enchanted with a steady joy - -- we stood 
upon a place founded before all time 
to be the locus of a pure event.
Who shows a child the way things are? Who puts it into constellations, gives the measure of detachment in its hand to use?

Who makes the death of children out of that grey bread that dries hard - who is it pokes it in the child’s round mouth, just like the core of a once juicy apple? ..

Murderers aren’t hard to understand. But this: to hold death, all of death before life starts, to hold it so gently in oneself and yet to feel no rage: this is beyond all words.