

# Night Sweat

Work-table, litter, books and standing lamp,  
plain things, my stalled equipment, the old broom---  
but I am living in a tidied room,  
for ten nights now I've felt the creeping damp  
float over my pajamas' wilted white . . .  
Sweet salt embalms me and my head is wet,  
everything streams and tells me this is right;  
my life's fever is soaking in night sweat---  
one life, one writing! But the downward glide  
and bias of existing wrings us dry---  
always inside me is the child who died,  
always inside me is his will to die---  
one universe, one body . . . in this urn  
the animal night sweats of the spirit burn.  
Behind me! You! Again I feel the light  
lighten my leaded eyelids, while the gray  
skulled horses whinny for the soot of night.  
I dabble in the dapple of the day,  
a heap of wet clothes, seamy, shivering,  
I see my flesh and bedding washed with light,  
my child exploding into dynamite,  
my wife . . . your lightness alters everything,  
and tears the black web from the spider's sack,  
as your heart hops and flutters like a hare.  
Poor turtle, tortoise, if I cannot clear  
the surface of these troubled waters here,  
absolve me, help me, Dear Heart, as you bear  
this world's dead weight and cycle on your back.