

Two Sonnets for Music

1. Commencement

Out of the nine-month warmth of your midnight,
Out of the long womb's enduring embrace,
Out to the bright-lit chill of your birth-place,
Severed to selfhood: you passed through this gate.

Out of the cradle as gentle as breathing,
Out of your "I want," pinned under their "no,"
Out, with that bright wet wound of your wanting,
You're severed from something: the mirror's face grows new.

Into new pleasures, desire, soft dangers,
Into dark forests — "I want" is "I will" —
Into the gravity-well gaze of others,

Into cold midnight, bound in your self's walls,
Or into an open and bright-lit and clean place,
You'll sever the cord that has held you. Commence.

2. Homecoming

Before the full-glow of your zenith and noontime,
Before your own children's enduring embrace,
Before you back into your quest for your home-place,
Before your long striving: before you become,

Before the year's cancer, the hospitalized panic,
Before the breath, weakened, forecasts the decline,
Before the "I want" reconciles with its limit,
Before the soft midnight from which "I want" came,

While you are singing or carrying burdens,
While you applaud how your own children sing,
While you are seeking your clean and your bright room,

While you dream the embrace of the long midnight's womb,
While you are carrying burdens, be singing.
While you still walk here. Before the return.