

*Twilight*

All day he works at his cousin's mill,  
 So when he get home at night, he always sits at this one window,  
 sees one time of day, twilight.

There should be more time like this, to sit and dream.

It's as his cousin says:

Living—living takes you away from sitting.

In the window, not the world but a squared-off landscape  
 representing the world. The seasons change,  
 each visible only a few hours a day.

Green things followed by golden things followed by whiteness—  
 abstractions from which come intense pleasures,  
 like the figs on the table.

At dusk, the sun goes down in a haze of red fire between two poplars.  
 It goes down late in summer—sometimes it's hard to stay awake.

Then everything falls away.

The world for a little longer  
 is something to see, then only something to hear,  
 crickets, cicadas.

Or to smell sometimes, aroma of lemon trees, of orange trees.  
 Then sleep takes this away also.

But it's easy to give things up like this, experimentally,  
 for a matter of hours.

I open my fingers—  
 I let everything go.

Visual world, language,  
 rustling of leaves in the night,  
 smell of high grass, of woodsmoke.

I let it go, then I light the candle.

*Primavera*

Spring comes quickly: overnight  
 the plum tree blossoms,  
 the warm air fills with bird calls.

In the plowed dirt, someone has drawn a picture of the sun  
 with rays coming out all around  
 but because the background is dirt, the sun is black.  
 There is no signature.

Alas, very soon everything will disappear:  
 the bird calls, the delicate blossoms. In the end,  
 even the earth itself will follow the artist's name into oblivion.

Nevertheless, the artist intends  
 a mood of celebration.

How beautiful the blossoms are—emblems of the resilience of life.  
 The birds approach eagerly.

*Crossroads*

My body, now that we will not be traveling together much longer  
 I begin to feel a new tenderness toward you, very raw and unfamiliar,  
 like what I remember of love when I was young—

love that was so often foolish in its objectives  
 but never in its choices, its intensities.  
 Too much demanded in advance, too much that could not be promised—

My soul has been so fearful, so violent:  
 forgive its brutality.  
 As though it were that soul, my hand moves over you cautiously,

not wishing to give offense  
 but eager, finally, to achieve expression as substance:

it is not the earth I will miss,  
 it is you I will miss.