

## EVENING (AFTER RAINER MARIA RILKE)

Jesse Welch

Painfully the evening swaps his guise  
Captured by a circle of ancient trees  
You look on as your world splits before you  
And flees  
Half plunging to hell  
Half soaring to heaven

You remain on earth  
belonging to none but yourself  
In the darkness of the silent house  
Pledged to neither  
Plummet to the fire  
Nor scale the sky

You are left with your life  
Impossibly muddled  
A realm of immense, ripening fears  
So that now  
Hemmed by solitude  
You are changed to stone  
Praying  
For flames and stars