

## *My Advice to You*

Spend the remainder of your life  
making what the world will appreciate: love,  
money, or war. Build a foreign tower  
that shimmers with mirrors.  
Call it your name and stand astonished  
as it reflects without end

the sky backed into a corner.

Inside this dream, fill your empty eyes  
with too much for your soul to stand,

but do not ever write a poem.

Scratch days on the wall of this prison  
you have made for yourself.  
Slam your fist against every closed door.  
Drag your heaviest possessions:  
the lingering bed sheet heat  
of a long gone lover,  
the creaking marital bed, your dead  
father's flattened shoes—  
all but forgotten—  
until a closet door opens

to a bomb explosion.

Force them all through the eye of a needle,  
but do not ever write a poem.

Love, you and I both know  
a writer's barter for bone and marrow  
is a losing battle against the senses.

Turn then from the misty mirror  
where your stiff finger once traced a poem,  
where slaves tried to cross with faith

a divided sea of dreams.

It's just too hard to bridge time and space,  
the shadow of a cloud passing over your face.

Love, you and I can never deny  
poets are more dead than alive.