

Before You Came

Before you came, all things were what they are—
The sky sight's boundary, the road a road,
The glass of wine a glass of wine; since then,
Road, wineglass, colour of heaven, all have taken
The hues of this heart ready to melt into blood—
Now golden, as the solace of meeting is,
Now grey, the livery of despondent hours,
Or tint of yellowed leaves, of garden trash,
Or scarlet petal, a flowerbed all ablaze:
Colour of poison, colour of blood, or shade
Of sable night. Sky, highroad, glass of wine—
The first a tear-stained robe, the next a nerve
Aching, the last a mirror momentarily altering....
Now you have come, stay here, and let some colour,
Some month, some anything, keep its own place,
And all things once again be their own selves,
The sky sight's bound, the road a road, wine wine.

Translated by Victor Kiernan