

RAINER MARIA RILKE:
THE ROMAN FOUNTAIN AT BORGHESE

Two basins, one the other half concealing,
Rising from old and rounded marble bands,
And from the topmost water gently kneeling
To meet the lower water where it stands,

Hearing its soft words dumbly, and revealing,
In secrecy, as if from hollow hands,
Behind the green and darkness, heaven's ceiling,
Like some as yet unnoticed circumstance;

Itself at peace, and in the lovely basin
Spreading without nostalgia, loops from loops,
Where now and then, and dreamingly, the drops

Lower themselves along the mossy trimmings
To the last looking-glass, whose basin sleeps
And smiles from underneath with overbrimmings.