

RAINER MARIA RILKE:  
THE GAZELLE

Enchanted creature, how can words aspire,  
Though paired in tune, to learn the rhyming spells  
That come and go in you like signal-bells?  
From out your forehead rises leaf and lyre;

A likeness sends your qualities aloft  
In songs of love, in which the lyrics, soft  
As roseleaves, settle on the hand that puts  
A volume down, and on the eye that shuts

To look at you: transported, so to speak,  
As if the legs were charged with ammunition,  
Kept back for now from springing while the neck  
Holds up the head to hear—in such a fashion  
As when the woodland bather halts in place,  
The forest lake in her averted face.