

At the Monastery Gate

I have desired to go
Somewhere where lilies bloom
Under a cloudless noon
And clear streams flow.

And I have wished to fly
Somewhere to fight no more,
Far from the daily war
On every side.

My feet are cut and scarred
On shards of broken faith;
My lungs grow black and hard
With every lying breath.

I have desired to wash
My false and flaking skin
Painted by other men
And cast it off.

And I have wished to break
The old and stiff constraint
In which my limbs are bent
And stand up straight.

I have desired to go
Somewhere where streams run clear,
Somewhere where lilies grow:
Admit me here.