

Rowan Ricardo Phillips Bernardo

FOR FIONA AND DUNCAN

Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course t'illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one—dreamed some, but
We did not doze. It was a quiet guard.
As quiet as custom. As though silence
Stood watch with us. Then Marcellus started
To tell his tales of brave Norway campaigns.
Again. My hearing palled with the moon's pitch.
And the sickly sky seemed a thing sans all.
I coughed, which I recall because it was
Then that the ghost appeared, though I'd thought him
A mere exhalation, the somber hoar-frost
Of our burning lungs. But it was the ghost,
There in the pendant night, clamb'ring to speak,
But mute, as though trophy of silence.
I called out to it; Marcellus leapt up.
We were like a flame forked by a great wind:
Two waving wildly, made of one matter.
And then he departed. We thought it best

Not to dwell on the thing, our ghosted glimpse,
Which could have been but time's spark and love's fire
Caught in both of our eyes somehow. What say
You, Marcellus? Or have I said it all?
O, Horatio, Horatio, had
You only been there. Poor Francisco, sick
Of heart he has been: I imagine you
Have heard, perhaps from himself (so Spanish
With his feelings). But you, Horatio,
Had you been here! I yet can see the stage,
And your brave "Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee speak!"
And waver would I my post that that ghost
(Were it that) would have stayed and gave you speech.

Vall de Núria

The white rose. The celestial silence.
The lake of light. The bed-like inner thigh
Of empyrean buttermilk and gold,
Call it what you will, it wakes me tonight.
Heaven reheavens. And the mind's prelude
To the touch of your lips on my forehead,
On my neck, our drowned echoes celloing
In the dark like flames drawn on the ocean,
Is not the mind's prelude but its heaven.
How somewhere not in Spain there's a mountain
Borrowing your name, my soul is its snow,
And so in the summer I am nothing,
When all I want do is lay my head
Down, lay my head down on the naked slope
Of your chest and listen there for my heart.