

“C. had a son on June 18th . . . I feel acutely that we are strangers, my sister and I; we don’t get through to each other, or say what we really feel. This depressed me violently on that occasion, when I wanted to have only generous and simple feelings toward her, pleasure in her joy, affection for all that was hers. But we are not really friends, and act the part of sisters. I don’t know what really gives her pain or joy, nor does she know how I am happy or how I suffer.” (1963)

There were years you and I
hardly spoke to each other
then one whole night
our father dying upstairs
we burned our childhood, reams of paper,
talking till the birds sang
Your face across a table now: dark
with illumination
This face I have watched changing
for forty years
has watched me changing
this mind has wrenched my thought
I feel the separateness
of cells in us, split-second choice
of one ovum for one sperm?
We have seized different weapons
our hair has fallen long
or short at different times
words flash from you I never thought of
we are translations into different dialects
of a text still being written
in the original
yet our eyes drink from each other
our lives were driven down the same dark canal