

Now everything is silence and remoteness
except for the bubbling of the water clocks,
drinking our time into their soft throats of sand.
With all the misadventures we see fit to add
as life's amendments here.

Time to think of the remedies
we proposed ourselves.

Time to recall them one by one.

How much waste in plot and counterplot,
for the gain of the imagination,
as if this ruined house
were not a blackboard
on which we saw the future written.

Taking up positions
in each other's self esteem,
what could we ask for
more than injury
and damage to each other?

So, at last,
after so very long,
I climb up here
onto this icy peak of my indifference!
Lacking now the soft compunction,
at hurting friend or enemy!
I shall be happier
- far happier,
at being less myself,
and men perhaps are best loved by punishment.
They do not live by meekness,
but by blood,
unwatered by the fear of failure.

How soon will all my lovely days be over,
and I be no more found beneath the sun,
- neither beside the many-murmuring seas
nor where the plain winds
whisper to the reeds,
nor in the tall beech woods
where roam the bright-lipped Oriads,
nor along the pasture side
where berry pickers stray,
and harmless shepherds
pipe their sheep to fold.

For I am eager,
and the flame of life burns quickly
in this fragile lamp of clay,
Passion and love
and longing and hot tears
consume this mortal Sappho,
this mortal Sappho
and, ah, too soon, ah, too soon,
a sable wind from the dark,
a sable wind from the dark
will blow upon me,
blow upon me, blow upon me,
and I be no more
found in this fair world,
for all the search
of the revolving moon
and patient shine
of everlasting stars.