LOUISE GLÜCK

SEATED FIGURE

It was as though you were a man in a wheelchair,
your legs cut off at the knee.
But I wanted you to walk.
I wanted us to walk like lovers,
arm in arm in the summer evening,
and believed so powerfully in that projection
that I had to speak, I had to press you to stand.
Why did you let me speak?
I took your silence as I took the anguish in your face,
as part of the effort to move—
It seemed I stood forever, holding out my hand.
And all that time, you could no more heal yourself
than I could accept what I saw.