LOUISE GLÜCK

THE DOORWAY

I wanted to stay as I was,
still as the world is never still,
not in midsummer but the moment before
the first flower forms, the moment
nothing is as yet past—
not midsummer, the intoxicant,
but late spring, the grass not yet
high at the edge of the garden, the early tulips
beginning to open—
like a child hovering in a doorway, watching the others,
the ones who go first,
a tense cluster of limbs, alert to
the failures of others, the public falterings
with a child’s fierce confidence of imminent power
preparing to defeat
these weaknesses, to succumb
to nothing, the time directly
prior to flowering, the epoch of mastery
before the appearance of the gift,
before possession.