THE INNER WALLPAPER

I will give the reasons
for my love, for my despair
I will live in the room
of my body and tell you
why I love the landscape

I will put my hand
on the sunbeam and with my fingers
unravel the rainbow
I will take the wind into my arms
and listen to the shell of the night

with your body I will
describe mine and in your eyes
as in a prism I will see the world
decrypted—a secret corner behind which
stairs lead endlessly to black cellars

I will say that my body
is a tower, that my hands
walk at night and that my head
has been calibrated so that all I see of the world
is my friends: you and another.
I who am highly homosexual
(Or so they say) will show
What truly is natural
And live like a hand caressing
The water in a bathtub.

Because who cares if I’m good
Or evil as long as
I can give everyone my wrist
And say feel this, I’m alive.

If I can be the small
Thunder with the
Hidden bolts of lightning
That send the swimmers running
From the beach to the guesthouse—
It is five o’clock in the afternoon.

If I can be the satín
Between the symbols
Of skyscrapers
A wise smile that says
Better than not yet is
Not ever.

If I can greet the rain
In his car

If I can wash myself
In the shower
If I can say
I am Hans Lodeizen good
Or evil I am in love
Without blushing a cherry orchard
For all the people.
this country in which I
did not lay down my love

if the black trees say so
during a thunderstorm it must be true

afterwards rain falls in abundance
a meagre comfort on the paths

and we who walk see
the villages from the darkness

and her hand, very small and
white was found among the leaves

only the thunder contradicts us
this country
a shitty country

where the smell
of sleaze will never blow away

dis country
whose language I will speak
under the sun, under the clouds,
happy (or else silent)
happy as a beetle
even under a different sky
even on a different beach,

flying

dis country
will be the lap for my tears
the ear shell for my cries
the mouth of my arms
the sickness of my love
the sun of my desire
a big wound,
a shitty country.
I will never do a lot of work, but I’ll never
sully the world.
I will listen in the wind like an old friend, and
despair of happiness.
I will tend to my genitals and gesticulate.
I will die in a city where it often rains.

in the end I will always be alone again and that’s when things are
loveliest.

but in order to accept that mercy I must take all
roads
into the world.

*February 12th 1949*
I am the purest animal on earth
I sleep with the night as with my body
and the night expands in my heart

on the dark loom of your fingers
I stitch a night of loneliness
colorful challenging changeable

I know all the tears of loneliness
hit me open me
I am a rose of happiness

come here trust me
I scatter the wind with stars

like a boat of abundance
in the parsimony of the sea

now you haven’t come
and softly I close.
bisecting this hour
supreme understanding runs
like a river
separating my two countries
one a dream
the other the dream’s cloudplay.
once, when I lived with the ants
in Switzerland, I heard
that wisdom is a mountain stream,
crashing down out of the sky
but I wasn’t listening

later I waited
by the open rock
but the hours melted and
the blue crystal did not

finally
a long rain
fell in my footsteps.
I who have known so many things
now I display glowing things.

now I let the kapok
of clouds drown me.

and once, I say, I walked
around town like a translucent eagle

landing on rooftops
and crying because the sky was so gray

and the clock struck four thirty.
alive, I existed
on an island floating
in the middle of the sea

ignorance
grew there like shrubbery

I waited for
a bird to fly over

it was four
o’clock in the afternoon and
the sky was faceless

I carried
empty buckets
in the evening, when
the sun, lingering
no longer, died

gold spilled
in silk.
tomorrow you’ll be dead; a smile
is what you’ll send to these verses
which will wait for it as for
a telegram. Don’t let the mailman
running with your final hours
bring bad tidings.

live. Smash the mirror
in which your face wept.
when I wasn’t doing this alone yet
when I, before this, still had people I would see
and didn’t cry in the bathtub in the mornings
when I could still walk and slept only once a
day, blissful and overcome

when I knew the shapes the wind makes
and full of desire fumbled through the night
when I began a new life looking
out across the mountains of the Sierra Nevada
when I longed for Tahiti in the summer

when I lived in Los Angeles and full
of tumult scoured the white morning
when in Amherst snow creaked beneath
my feet and I thought of Seldon
when I walked in the Elysian Fields

I lived longer than in Wassenaar.