

## Commitment

At first I dreamt armies marching,  
then wild dogs in the night,  
rushing forth from dense forests  
into the opening where I stood,  
alone and unprotected.

Those were the hollow times,  
when sleep seldom came.

Frightened, I fled on foot,  
down to where I dreamt a frozen lake  
slumbering, thick with ice.  
Circling the lake's edge  
I came upon a path, seldom trod.  
On it went, endlessly,  
like frozen years winding their way, unredeemed.

Then, lo! a crack appears in the ice.  
Water trickles, slowly at first,  
then a gush, surging downstream, fast.

I follow its course  
and dream a new river  
flowing underground through  
abandoned towns long forgotten  
and buried; through once strong buildings,  
cleansing old walls stained  
with years of grime and sorrow, yet solid  
still, capable of bearing up.

Stepping gradually into the river,  
I welcome the cleansing flow.  
A wide and gentle power pulls  
against my ankles, legs, then hips,  
offering to carry my worn body  
away, quick and easy.

(O! for the release!)

Through the long, taut muscles of my legs  
I must decide: stand firm or  
yield to the river's offer.

But if I yield, who then,  
will dream forth a fresh, new city  
built upon these stained old walls?