



(Image: The Sound of White Water Rushing—the Alps)

Sonnets to Orpheus III [FIRST PART]

A god can do it. But tell me, how shall
a man follow him through the narrow lyre?
His senses are split. At the crossing of two
heartways stands no temple for Apollo.

Song, as you teach him, is not desire,
not the touting of some final achievement;
Song is Being. Easy for a god.
But when are we to be? And when does he turn

towards our existence the Earth and the Stars?
This is nothing, young one, that you love, when
the voice pushes the mouth open,—learn

to forget such murmurings. They will pass.
True singing is a different kind of breath.
A breath around nothing. A sigh in a god. A wind.

Rainer Maria Rilke (tr. Cliff Crego)