



Archaic Torso of Apollo

We do not know his unheard of head,
in which the seeing of his eyes ripened. But
his trunk still glows like a thousand candles,
in which his looking, only turned down slightly,

continues to shine. Otherwise the thrust of the
breast wouldn't blind you, and from the light twist
of the loins a smile wouldn't flow into
that center where the generative power thrived.

Otherwise this stone would stand half disfigured
under the transparent fall of the shoulders,
and wouldn't shimmer like the skin of a wild animal;

it wouldn't be breaking out, like a star, on
all its sides: for there is no place on this stone,
that does not see you. You must change your life.

Rainer Maria Rilke
(tr. Cliff Crego)