

Death never was the enemy we thought,
Nor is it sinister or strange. Our acts
Could not go on without it, this pivot tip
That makes the drama work. Our closing is brought
About by saturation, emptied facts,
Not death. It gives us earthly drive and grip,
This old inviolate contract to equip
Us with an exit that repels but attracts,
Spares us rote lines, dull plots, and staling breath.
Foreverness of now and here impacts:
The wise Director leaves no player caught
On stage so long he mouths a shibboleth
Instead of song. The scene is saved by death,
Resumed by understudies we have taught.

But death is just a word we mortals use,
All entities don't regard the same.
No design is new— man, beast or other thing.
Time curves away, form alters to diffuse
Its atoms, rebuilds, takes another name.
Matter returns to an elemental spring;
We must do the same, completing the ring.
Energy recycles, fuels cosmic flame
As basic thread for stars being basted.
Each role we learn supports the total frame;
Evolving stages offer different views.
Nothing we master is lost or wasted;
It fits in vast collages being pasted.
Endings are openings where each part renews.