Stream

i leaned over an eddy

in a fast moving stream

and there i saw a reflection, but it wasn’t me

no, sorry, that’s a cliché

it was me, but not the me i wanted

he would have known how to smile

to mock the fates, to grin at the illusion of free will

a drop of my essence leaked from my lips

no, that’s not it

drool dribbled from my loose mouth

distorted my image even as i moved

to recover my dignity

when the ripples had moved the surface of the pool

i glimpsed for a second he whom i would adore

and i shut my eyes in the face of evil —

better to be ugly than right