

And started shaping my life to his,
Finding him in his right supplies
And sharing his miles of exercise.

Next morning the minute I was about,
He was at the door to be let out.
As much as to say, "I have paid my call.
You mustn't feel hurt if now I'm all
For getting back somewhere, or further on."
I opened the door, and he was gone.
I was to taste in little the grief
That comes of dogs' lives being so brief.
Only fraction of ours, at most,
He might have been the dream of a ghost,
In spite of the way his tail had smacked
My floor, so hard and matter-of-fact.

And things have been going so strangely since,
I wouldn't be too hard to convince,
I might even claim he was Sirius.
Think of presuming to call him Gus!
The star itself, heaven's greatest star,
Not a meteorite but an avatar,
Who had made this overnight descent
To show by deeds he didn't resent
My having depended on him so long,
And yet done nothing about it in song.

A symbol was all he could hope to convey,
An intimation, a shot of ray,
A meaning I was supposed to seek,
And finding, not necessary speak.
(1953) 1962 "In the Clearing".