

After Rilke

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Once, the summer seemed an unending,
 an unspoken syllable
but now it lays shadows across sundials
and the wind steps from the field grass.

Your throat, because of the slow pollen, begins to close
and the voice is no longer recognizably
 your own.

 In the arbor,

last fruits swell and bend their branches;
the sun offers a few final days of light,
before hurrying apples and grapes to one more ripening and
 then, one day soon, the sweetness of heavy wine.

It's time.

Whoever now has no home will build no more,
as things will become other things, like a translation that forgets,
word for pallid word,
 how rivers flow only one way.

Whoever is now alone will remain so,
 and, being alone, will wake each day into a dread quiet.
 Some times the eyes
 open in a foreign place and to
read or write long letters
 is a geometry
for sleeplessly wandering streets and alleyways
 late into the night
 as leaves rasp across asphalt.