

## Courting Forgetfulness

It's hard to know what sort of rough music  
Could send our forgetfulness back into the ground,  
From which the gravediggers pulled it years ago.

The first moment of the day we court forgetfulness.  
Even when we are fully awake, a century can  
Go by in the space of a single heartbeat.

The life we lose through forgetfulness resembles  
The earth that sticks to the sides of plowshares  
And the eggs the hen has abandoned in the woods.

A thousand gifts were given to us in the womb.  
We lost hundreds during the forgetfulness of birth,  
And we lost the old heaven on the first day of school.

Forgetfulness resembles the snow that weighs down  
The fir boughs; behind our house you'll find  
A forest going on for hundreds of miles.

It's to our credit that we can remember  
So many lines of Rilke, but the purpose of forgetfulness  
Is to remember the last time we left this world.

Bly, Robert. Talking into the Ear  
of a Donkey. New York:  
Norton, 2011.