

Middle Age

by John Riley

after Robert Lowell

There are no city-chewed streets,
only white and lilac blooming dogwood trees.
Cars with whisper engines
murmur past.

It is spring, not mid-winter,
already my light coat is a burden.
It is true, at every early-morning,
still dark, or pale-shadowed corner,

I meet my father, too.
My age, he is dead,
stares as blindly
as in life.

Why ask him to be forgiven
when he is not who I hurt?
I injure only by loving.

He is what passes while I wait
to be spirited. Tonight,
I'll lay my head down with the living.

