I could walk you
as I walked the streets of Rome
the broken rhythm near the
baths of Caraculla
sprinting along the Via Appia Nuova
midnight and backwards

A question of tapping of high heels
down the Piazza di Spagna
at night after the flowerstalls
are shrouded
The mystery of the Roman princes and
their ladies nibbling on osso bucco
in the communist backrooms of trattorias

Mention of black sneakers whispering down the Via Margutta
near long-haired balconies
like the heartbeat

All the while back to you
walking you like the three-ring circus
walks its Russian tightrope people
near the Porto Portese
ah the celebration the fuss
the reporters mumbling 'one world'
at the suede Russians and one
face of one vast child
out there under a real tent
with the skin shoes tiptapping

All the while sprinting backwards to you
and your Italianate memories
or where were you last time round
when you were the counterman at
the latticeria and you were
a new Pope bestowing infant smirks
on my blackstocking legs
the sound of huzzahs and dicta

It is not hypocrisy if the soles
are from Florence and therefore cheaper
The better to walk you with
my dear Caesar
It is easier than Viareggio cliffs
victory has no pretended wings
Once moving one can run here as
air and leather grow thicker inland
You become more visible

1960