DECEMBER MORNING

How did I come to this late happiness
as I wake into my remaining days
another morning in my life with Paula
taking me by surprise like the first one
I know it is rash to speak about happiness
with the Fates so near that I can hear them
but this morning even the old regrets
seem to have lost their rancor
and to harbor shy hopes like the first grass
of spring appearing between paving stones
when I was a small child and I see
that each step has been leading me
to the present morning that I recognize
before daylight and I forget that
I am almost blind and I see the piles
of books I was going to read next
there they wait like statues of sitting dogs
faithful to someone they used to know
but happiness has a shape made of air
it was never owned by anyone
it comes when it will in its own time