

Night Comes On

Jennifer Warnes

I went down to the place
Where I knew she lay waiting
Under the marble and the snow
I said, Mother I'm frightened
The thunder and the lightning
I'll never come through this alone
She said, I'll be with you
My shawl wrapped around you
My hand on your head when you go
And the night came on
It was very calm
I wanted the night to go on and on
But she said, Go back to the World
We were fighting in Egypt
When they signed this agreement
That nobody else had to die
There was this terrible sound
And my father went down
With a terrible wound in his side
He said, Try to go on
Take my books, take my gun
Remember, my son, how they lied
And the night comes on
It's very calm
I'd like to pretend that my father was wrong
But you don't want to lie, not to the young
We were locked in this kitchen
I took to religion
And I wondered how long she would stay
I needed so much
To have nothing to touch
I've always been greedy that way
But my son and my daughter
Climbed out of the water
Crying, Papa, you promised to play
And they lead me away
To the great surprise
It's Mama, don't peek, Mama, cover your eyes
And they hide, they hide in the World
Now I look for her always
I'm lost in this calling
I'm tied to the threads of some prayer
Saying, When will she summon me
When will she come to me
What must I do to prepare
When she bends to my longing
Like a willow, like a fountain
She stands in the luminous air
And the night comes on
And it's very calm
I lie in her arms and says, When I'm gone
I'll be yours, yours for a song
Now the crickets are singing
The vesper bells ringing
The cat's curled asleep in his chair
I'll go down to Bill's Bar
I can make it that far

And I'll see if my friends are still there
Yes, and here's to the few
Who forgive what you do
And the fewer who don't even care
And the night comes on
It's very calm
I want to cross over, I want to go home
But he says, Go back, go back to the World