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Keeping the Lord's Night Watch

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KEEPING THE LORD'S NIGHT WATCH

my days are like a shadow
over the river
the garment I wear is a black sail
those that pass by
hold their tongues like shovels
their throats are open graves
in the valley they gather
against me
with the blood of the children of light
in their sheaths
quite alone I look out over the desert
and I see the ambushed lovers of the moon
calling off their horses
I hear them crying underwater
I see the innocent afloat
with their eyes sucked out
and I prepare
bless the blindfolded virgins
holding their breath in the iron flutes
lord let these throats pass by
uncut
bless the wind over the water
the wind among the mountains
bless the horses and ships

1962