

1973

Sitting with My Arms around My Knees

Kathleen Norris

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LISTENING TO MUSIC ALONE
for D.

Like the tree
No one hears falling, or, as Emily put it,
The sherry the guest leaves in the glass:
Time without you

Old photographs, like good intentions,
The sound of a clock.
How it is in here, how one night passes
Through a needle's eye:
Incapacity first, extravagant desires

Mysterious city,
There are so many of us:
Waterpipes have a voice,
The refrigerator dances in the corner
A wrong number dialed by a drunk
Is my one affirmation

SITTING WITH MY ARMS AROUND MY KNEES

Sitting this way
Because I have to hold on to something;
The soul has desires, but the body has none,
I don't even know if where I go
Is anyplace you've been: doubting castle

My gentleman prefers loose ends,
The excitement of overturning things;
The connoisseur of kisses wants me to chew
a mouthful of ice before each kiss

My need is so great,
A mirror I turn to the wall.
Sometimes the locks give way,
But not now