a forgotten spell

i

there is something I wish to say
but I do not yet know
what it is

it has shape form solidity
that resist discovery

I try nutcrackers
it slips between them
unbroken
I will use my thumb nail
I will peel it like an orange
or pare it — this thought-apple

perhaps words will do
I suspect it is itself made
of words
mine are too ordinary
the magic formula
evades the normal

all I need is a name
that should be power enough
the merest bubble on an infant's tongue
the first trial lisings that are speech
fix and diminish that which is
or recreate it fresh as the first song

this three-year-old now trusting takes my hand
she's not yet learned the words that spell
her sickness out for all to read —
the mediterranean disease —
yet
she knows how to hold her arm out straight
smile and call the doctor by his name
as all her blood's let out then re-transfused
each five weeks that she lives

and she's alive
to loving looks and knows some colors well—
yellow grey pink yellow grey
and she can say nine numbers
twelve months seven days

tries phrases
that complete one sentence short
take back your tongues of fire
your unspeakable spirit
the sky's our cave wall
we'll use picture-writing

the world's wrapped tight in layers
of printed paper

poor golf-ball

what lies what lies at bottom
is a way of learning

I never did trust talk

let go your ropes of restraining
your solemn gravity

as

night bandages our eyes
things are known without labels

before morning comes stepping
we shall recognize the guttural
clack clack of her sabots
on the cobblestones of day

paddy webb