

# Lenten Song

By Phillis Levin

That the dead are real to us  
Cannot be denied,  
That the living are more real

When they are dead  
Terrifies, that the dead can rise  
As the living do is possible

Is possible to surmise,  
But all the stars cannot come near  
All we meet in an eye.

Flee from me, fear, as soot  
Flies in a breeze, do not burn  
Or settle in my sight,

I've tasted you long enough,  
Let me savor  
Something otherwise.

Who wakes beside me now  
Suits my soul, so I turn to words  
Only to say he changes

Into his robe, rustles a page,  
He raises the lid of the piano  
To release what's born in its cage.

If words come back  
To say they compromise  
Or swear again they have died,

There's no news in that, I reply,  
But a music without notes  
These notes comprise, still

As spring beneath us lies,  
Already something otherwise.

Source: *Poetry* (July 2013)