

Refusing Silence

By Tess Gallagher

Heartbeat trembling
your kingdom
of leaves
near the ceremony
of water, I never
insisted on you. I admit
I delayed. I was the Empress
of Delay. But it can't be
put off now. On the sacred branch
of my only voice – I insist.
Insist for us all,
which is the job
of the voice, and especially
of the poet. Else
what am I for, what use
am I if I don't
insist?
There are messages to send.
Gatherings and songs.
Because we need
to insist. Else what are we
for? What use
are we?

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