

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2001**  
**(for Rachel, who dreams in Brooklyn)**

By the park, my daughter dreams  
of young firemen who helped her home  
with bags and babies – dead  
beneath the tower. One said,  
“What’s this we hear? You’re leaving us?  
Rachel, we’d never flee  
this home of ours, no matter what it meant  
to live and die like me.”  
*by tower, park, and spangled sea.*

Her train of the fretful living slips  
quick-quick, click-clack through the empty station  
lighted like a stage  
and mobbed with ghosts who played  
their time, now mount to a phantom tower.  
If well connected, we  
may raise these dead, as every generation  
turns salvation’s key:  
*by tower, park, and spangled sea.*

Life or death means parting from  
the darling hopes and loves we lose;  
the sense of loss seeps in  
throughout, like sense of sin.  
“I take my place among my City’s  
types, from body free,”  
the legless beggar sang, propped up against  
a golden Trumpery:  
*by tower, park, and spangled sea.*

Because the name of life is Change,  
all are dying as they live.  
We part in pain from love,  
with care from work we have,  
from work and love we never had,  
to come or still undreamed.  
Things will or won’t outlast each living soul;  
what will is how things seemed:  
*the tower, the park, and the spangled sea.*

Misfit moderns strut their stuff  
in carefully preserved quaint towns;  
    but part of this City's maze  
    dies each day, replaced  
anew in other forms, the more  
    rebuilt the same if we –  
beggar, fireman, scholar, fashion-plate –  
    with single eye may see:  
*the tower, the park, and the spangled sea.*

Love is a rule that places us  
where we belong in time. The plant  
    on our tenement window sill,  
    how a sea breeze fills  
a curtain, that rock in the park where you read  
    and dream and the tower seem  
perfected; love would have synchronal things  
    in timeless time agree:  
*the tower, the park, and the spangled sea.*

Its spirit survives this City's parts,  
how these things mattered reborn in its people:  
    eyes taking pictures of old  
    between the body and soul.  
Augustine thought death was born of sin,  
    wrote, "Love means I want you to be,"  
a way of seeing and so a way of being,  
    root and branch of the one tree:  
*the tower, the park, and the spangled sea.*