

JANINA AZA KARPINSKA

Despised and Rejected, Echo Returns
a cento

Come to me in the silence of the night,
this bitter night. Open to me—

that opening, letting in, lets out no more,
as sunlight on a stream; lingering.

ABOUT THE POEM

“Despised and Rejected, Echo Returns” was created from “Echo” and “Despised and Rejected” (1866) by Christina Rossetti (1862 and 1866, respectively). About the poem and the process of composing it, Janina Aza Karpinska writes:

Working with the constraint of time (close to the submission deadline) and only splicing lines from two Christina Rossetti poems, I decided to run with whatever first caught my attention. This being the third cento I’d attempted, I wanted something more spare than the others, and pared down to the barest minimum, yet with a feeling of broad, open, fluid scope.

