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The Neighbor translated by Franz Wright

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THE NEIGHBOR

Strange violin, is that you?
In how many distant cities now
has your lonely night spoken to mine?
Do hundreds play you—, or one?

Are all of the great cities occupied
by somebody who, but for you,
would have long disappeared in the rivers?
And why does this constantly happen to me,

why am I always the neighbor of those
who out of their own fear compel you to sing
and say: this life is heavier
than the heaviness of all things.

*translated by
Franz Wright*