

Sylvia Plath Symposium 2012

Gabriela Ramirez-Chavez

The Plath scholars zigzag like bees
between limestone buildings
to the Lilly Library.

They check at the front desk
their raincoats, purses, happiness, and sanity
to enter the Slocum Room which houses
you. Ach, du.

And I among them, I am only twenty.
I sit in the back, waiting for you to rise from the dead.
Your letters, academic papers, paintings, lecture notes, and journals

jolt me to a stop. You are the pure gold baby
whose eyes once looked upon these drafts.
Who leaned over a typewriter and aligned, aligned, aligned.
Rhymes, words, and themes.

I slide my thumb over a tiny drawing of a theater
inked in the margin of your black journal.
So many thumbs now slide over your corpus
and forefingers caress a tress of your hair,
one of seven your mother sold.

We covet your DNA and poetry,
and pass around vials of dust from your last home.
I would pay a very large charge to see you
blow out eighty candles on your birthday, today.

We secretly pray to bring you
back, back, back from the darkness.

Someone takes out a Ouija board.
We yearn to see you spell ich, ich, ich, ich.

A scholar speaks,
She is here with us.

We close our eyes and feel you
down our backs, a chill god
descending like mist.