

Moniza Alvi: after Jules Supervielle
To My Posthumous Self

You died from love of the world,
that terminal illness.

Here you are lying under the turf,
not a marble headstone
but the simple summer grass.

And the bees fly past.
They say that all has turned out well
and that you're here, dead...

Those strange gentlemen, the funeral Shades
guided you with their sure hands,
their dirty fingernails –

and that was how they erased you
from that perpetual line,
the human race.

At last you sleep, never
to awaken, horizontal
but with no horizon.

Undesirable, and desiring nobody.
Sound asleep. But oh,
to make a ripple,
a little circle in a lake.