Prologue for a Book of Songs

William Pitt Root
This is the book of ordeal, 
of hinges 
upon which turn 
the great doors of pain. Open 
them as you open your eyes 
from that long sleep 
strange with dreams 
whose traces linger in the darkness 
of your nose and throat 
which are the last to wake. 
Open them 
as you open the last letter 
from the friend 
whose agony is ending 
without seizures 
of regret. Open them 
as if to fields of ancient ice 
the daily thaw and freeze 
has sealed in a vast mirror, 
that shield over darkness 
blinding with the wide sheen of the sun. 
The grace of long arrival 
dissolves the way before.