

I Have Heard It Said . . .

. . . that the moment of death focuses a mind,
which sounds like a great place to find
a verse or two, to let you know for sure. But I
will already be too late.

. . . that they can kill the revolutionary but not
the revolution, and this provides a bit
of comfort. Yet both poet and poetry
are scheduled to die in the same instant,
and you will simply have to remember me
by lines already written.

. . . that we have finally become civilized.
And it is true, I won't be buried,
burned or skinned alive,
drawn and quartered, crucified, not even
hanged, electrocuted, gassed. They
will simply stick a needle in my arm,
even swab first with alcohol to make sure no
infection can harm the flesh after my final gasp.
Yet still, it seems to me, if I turn out
to be mistaken, and there is, after all,
an afterlife, it is not *my* soul which you
will need to pray for.