

## Charlotte Delbo's Writings

### Prayer to the Living to Forgive Them for Being Alive

You who are passing by  
well dressed in all your muscles  
clothing which suits you well  
or badly  
or just about  
you who are passing by  
full of tumultuous life within your arteries  
glued to your skeleton  
as you walk with a sprightly step athletic awkward  
laughing sullenly, you are all so handsome  
so commonplace  
so commonplacely like everyone else  
so handsome in your commonplaceness  
diverse  
with this excess of life which keeps you  
from feeling your bust following your leg  
your hand raised to your hat  
your hand upon your heart  
your kneecap rolling softly in your knee  
how can we forgive you for being alive...

I beg you  
do something  
learn a dance step  
something to justify your existence  
something that gives you the right  
to be dressed in your skin in your body hair  
learn to walk and to laugh  
because it would be too senseless  
after all  
for so many to have died  
while you live  
doing nothing with your life.