

8. Music Award

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Counterpoint: The Lost Cords

The therapists all gave her up: "No hope,
why waste your time? She'll never speak a word,
she's closed her mind. The case will break your heart."
Like high-pitched bees trapped in an envelope,
an idea whined inside my head. I heard
music in my sleep, knew it could impart
a healing strength, if not to her, to me
if this approach should fail. My reasoning
was simple. Savagery had caused her state--
let human heights expressed harmonically--
the smoothing, prodding shades and seasoning
of concerts throb down walls and activate
her frozen cords and self-imprisoned tongue,
re-tune her soul to beauty, played and sung.

The reels unrolled their offerings in her room.
Soft-spun sonatas, choirs and symphonies
recorded on her brain as sure as wax.
Rachmoninoff-- her eyes began to bloom--
Debussy, Brahms, Tschaikowsky's melodies
seeped in and out the conscious parallax
of time and tone, entwined inseparables.
Romanced, wing-shod, string-plucked-- who could resist?
One day I stopped the sound-feast. She must ask
for more. She must end the silence. Miracles
began. She'd felt some chord resolved with Liszt--
Les Preludes-- wanted it again. Her task
was plain. She had to name or hum the thing.
And music won. She found the notes to sing.