

## From a Visit

*for my brother*

On the day I leave Ohio,  
 I rise early, scour  
 the cups in the sink.  
 Your friends are in their separate  
 sleeps, and the house  
 is wealthy with their secrecy.  
 Lisa sealed tight  
 into her dark skin dreams of you,  
 while autumn-haired Jim muzzles  
 one word. They both love you  
 more simply than I can.  
 I almost forgive them for this.

Last night, we were dancing —  
 together, as we are together, always,  
 in one name. But this was so much easier  
 — one mutual music to follow,  
 one hand in one hand,  
 your small ear a cup  
 into which I put some words.

We are not sorry, ever.  
We mean what we say.  
But if they keep returning,  
the older insults coming back,  
when we talk this way  
we do not deserve to be unhappy.

Even so, I hear the Ohio river heave,  
you would hear it if I woke you,  
the water shirking its ice.  
What would she hear, and the small  
red-headed boy, in love  
with the word "joy", which comes  
to him gratuitously, even  
in sleep, this cold and lonesome morning,  
what would he hear?