

Heather in Pictures

She has a voice like
cold silver grazing bare skin;
it's an absinthe sound.
And that whispering, airy
quality: feathers on glass.

Her hair, shadow black,
a university of
trellises low and
steel in the moon, her eyes a
shattering of icicles.

We made, and toasted,
and leaned on that frail purpose
like toads, tongues firing,
flames welling up from beneath
our seats: this was outside time.

Then I was laid back
in her flame, her orange Oz,
and she swam around
me like a pretty yellow
hurricane; I was water.

But our dearest walls
for timid tired held fast,
those grasping fingers
retreating coolly, the world
spinning as bees round our eyes.

So we sing shiny
and so falls flesh, and when we
grow tired like old
mushrooms, and stare through windows
between dreams, we have only
the blank page, awaiting, calmly.

John Phillips