

to the woman whom I unblushingly call
my young love
and kiss with the energy of a beetcrusher.

No one awards us a trophy
for our endless evenings' odysseys
with our marathon love.
And our intertwined fingers
are as complicated as birds' nests.

We take terrific pains with everything.
It's a question of loving correctly.
Everyone seems to know how it's done.
We strive energetically to learn.

Saying goodbye takes three hours
and morning comes riding a streetcar
from Lower Fasan Way
and gathers me up into a merciful slumber
after the test of strength.

-- Klaus Rifbjerg

Translated from the Danish by:
Nadia Christensen and
Alexander Taylor

NEW JERSEY THE PINE BARRENS

1. moss in the wet cedar
i go into the woods
most every day with
a bowbar cut down
dead branches i look
70 but i'm really 86
sometimes standing in
the floating bed in
the cranberries i think
how the city's grown
close they think
in the bogs here we
all have pointy ears
pine snakes in the
dark green mink deer
otter raccoon milk
snakes corn snakes
catfish rare tree
frogs that sound like
a state trooper you
can't find them any
where but here

6. one road thru the woods carried
 so much freight that in places
 it divided stage coaches the
 philadelphia to tuckerton run
 still runs thru the branches the
 taverns gone now abandoned mansions
 in the tall ferns wild strawberries
 thru cracked marble men hip deep
 in cranberries who remember this
7. pieces of an old house bricks
 glassy blue slag pebbles
 sad roads that were streets
 washington mount st
 quaker bridge martha
 the last furnace blown out
10. geese in by beever river
 i go regular down to
 reeveston cemetery
 pour whiskey on a friends
 grave just like he asked
 one night with lizzie when
 i passed by and she said
 what ails you i told her
 i was going to john's
 grave and i poured old
 john bower a fifth just
 then an old fashioned
 blue pheasant jumped up
 behind the gravestone my
 hat flew off my head flew
 off from fear elizabeth
 said that once you got
 it fred brown that's
 once you got it

-- Lyn Lifshin

Niskayuna NY

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