

Matthew

I sat on the white stone steps, that summer,
and sometimes it seemed that I had never seen the sky,
so rounded it was, like the arc of the globe,
and beneath it a cut green lawn, distant trees:
like a world in miniature
painted within a hollow ball.

Janey brought out pineapple juice
in cups of crushed ice
and we couldn't get over it.

Down at the little house, Matthew passed.
You should have seen him, Janey said,
the way he looked at your books, your jacket,
your things on the chair: He loves you.
He did. He wanted to know everything
about me. When I told him I bored him,
he rolled his blue eyes up.

Sitting before him sometimes, my face clouded over
for reasons even I didn't know.

"What's happening?" Matthew always said,
never missing a thing.

He was so easy to please: a new hairclip,
lipstick, the red nail polish I bought in town.
He never said I'd make it; he wasn't sure.
I would. I gave him a round stone once.
You hold me in your hands, you will not
let me fall. He set it up
on his window ledge then. I saw it there
every day after that, and before I knew it
Matthew had signed me out.