

Juniper Lane, Summer

I remember the sweat of summer
dripping coyly off my mouth.
Summer spilling soft and slow, like honey,
barely creeping through the south.

All the houses with their windows open,
and the dog beneath the steps,
lying lazy, low, and panting softly,
all the porches cleanly swept.

Seeking shade we fled
to the darkness of the woods,
where we learned to dance--
we learned to dance, as we should.

Grandpa drank too much and told us
stories of the one and only war.
Singing sweet and soft, then growing silent,
and we asked to hear some more.
We went to bed with the spirits shifting,
moving slowly in the heat.
We felt them full, then flicker, fading shyly,
floating softly down the street.

Selling lemonade down on the corner,
sticky sweetness for a dime.
Days passed delicate in halting humor,
No one noticing the time.
Till one day I am my mother's daughter,
small and lean and brown and strong.
Lines of laughter leading from my eyes,
lines of truth within my song.