

*Whooping*

In the shallows of the Mississippi  
In Moline, a crane stands looking north  
Toward Iowa, and like a jaded hippie  
He seems lost in fumes that issue forth

From desiccated features of his brain.  
It's dawn; he has all day to fish and eat.  
And though the river's feathered by new rain  
And currents mimic minnows at his feet—

Despite the lightning on the Iowa shore—  
The urgency is gone; he can't remember  
What he used to rise so early for.  
But he still sees uprisings in November

When the whole flock lifted like one wing  
And females used to sip the sky and sing.

*Contraband—A Novlet*

He passed her in the bottled water aisle  
And noticed summer skin—not thin, but slim—  
And no overt intention to beguile—  
She's shopping now, oblivious to him.

Six minutes later, at the register—  
A second chance. Although it only was  
A stolen glance—he didn't stare at her—  
She felt its pressure, as a woman does.

Her right-hand fingers moved to touch her ring  
As if to say—*I'm married—Can't you see?*  
But then he glanced again, while debiting  
His groceries—so that she, unconsciously,

Began to tug and twist her wedding band  
As if to say—*Oh damn! Get off my hand!*