

## 1838: Making New England's Acquaintance

Winter is a man  
that much is certain--  
not so old but hungry  
for attention  
and whatever keeps knees  
working as they should.  
I do wrestle with his brother,  
Massachusetts.  
Sometimes toss  
a fist of laughter  
back at him--my kind  
of fire. List my people's  
names to burn his breath.  
Cough the strength  
saved up in me with  
work and water.  
Strength I counted  
on to cross the  
creek and bay.  
Cold up here is  
something to be  
broken. Shackles  
that no dollar  
price can pay. The  
ice on morning  
buckets. Every  
day's white wall.

## 1845: Sky Speaking

The man of the house is Wild--  
lion-spirited in a way he corrals  
with buttons. He, who loves the air  
also loves his roar, his consequences—  
rough or shined. Loves to jostle  
wide storms, the barreling forces  
we squat and deliver.

A certain flavor  
counters his emphatic  
flair. That one. Much  
wrongdoing curdles in his wake.

The woman is two women: a dead twin,  
in broken threads, enchants her living  
and climbs her mind. Asleep  
or waking, she will always wear  
this breath-weight. Already she balances  
the leakage of this crooked crown  
with knowledge of her own.  
Which is to say she lives twice. Laughing

now, with the man, she tunes  
her ferocious machine  
for an unthinkable walk  
thirty years and more, to the farthest  
meadow, the undreamed hill. This one.  
The might of her hips is a might  
never measured in full day,  
never yet sung.

## **Excerpt from Quiet**

### **3. terror**

Far into the night  
one or two Words make the difficult  
trip upstream. Come morning  
these land, burning with a will  
to ride my tongue. Oh, they swell  
bigger than terror. Just let my breath  
go slack: they spill. They spill.