

Backwoods

You'd go back to him, then,
your swaggering full-bird
second husband, fragged in Korea
and now hunkered down
here in this backwater?

How could you,
after he blackened
your eye,
dumb-bitched you
and wrecked your canoe?

You escaped from that place once,
his cottage collapsed
on the banks of that dirty, dredged ditch
he calls a river; all you needed was a car
where you could sleep, keep your things.

Yes, you're alone now we kids
are all grown and left home;
but would you really go back
to that tarpaper shack squatting
in bottles and weeds,

where your beloved canoe still lies on its side
split like your lip
where he kicked it,
the night you ran home to us
in your nightgown and only one shoe.