**The Marsh**

*“Nature likes to hide itself” -Heraclitus*

Seventeen years I pooled in the valleys of a girl

and when it was time to become a woman,

I, instead, spit out the marsh.

I spent hot nights binding cordgrass to my chest,

flattening the tidal flow with an ace bandage

but the marsh cannot be bound,

so it pooled cool in my nests: mud-

curved hips and mud-

creased thighs…

I had skipped meals like flat stones, smiled

to my mirror, counting the ripples,

though by morning I swallowed them, too,

for the marsh knows hunger well,

it is salt-steeped tongue and salt-

soaked sheets,

but much more than salt.

Seventeen years I pooled in the valleys of a girl

but, seagrass now pecks her surface

like the heron rising, wetly, from his egg

and the sun, it shyly follows.