

Sayre (*Woman Professor*)

The men in her department envied her:
she was too handsome, had published too many poems.
So she'd tone down.

She wore olive-drab all that autumn,
said she was in a dry season,
could not write a single poem.

But her cheeks
took on the flush
of a woman riding.

Hand-to-hip, she'd
breathe in the air of evening,
the casual woman.

Sayre.
She'd claim she was a loner,
and had a bad spine. Who'd envy her?

So intense her fist
would smash glass
of a Sunday evening.

But she'd flush a whole nest of quail
out of hiding
without so much as a shotgun (or a sound.)

Camouflaged,
broods of poems came.
The poem for her was—love's occasion.

She'd rise after, with that radiance
of a woman to meet her lover, eye shining
face to face:

Not one of the men guessed it was another woman:
So handsomely she moved, so darkly as through glass.