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Ghost

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Ghost

While driving across the Fort Henry Bridge,
The late night orange of the Wheeling skyline
Bathed me in memory. I continued home.
Coming into town, I could only imagine
Mid-Ohio, with you in it, waiting.
As I drove along Route 2, the river
Watched me seeking out our hiding spots
Along its other shore: down a dusty road,
Past other younger lovers, across the tracks,
Over a hill, beyond a wooden shed,
And into Ohio's sandy, weedy belly at water's edge.
We hoped the roaming searchlights of passing boats
Would not catch us loving in their sweep.

Was that where new life began,
Or was it in your room, while our cookies
Burned in the kitchen beneath us?
We were not careful enough.
Later that summer you called from across the river,
The pain of your labor shook and cracked your voice
As it tried to reach me along the wires.
You had lost something from inside you.
I did not want to believe you,
Or offer you comfort as you mourned.
Now her ghost does not allow me to sleep at night.
She vacillates between us like a thread
Floating on her parents' breath,
The last evidence of our lost days and nights
Here, in the river towns you've left behind.

Jennie Dawes