BY THE LAKE

I will not miss his soup sent back, untouched;  
his metal tumbler by the sink, flat ice  
in warming gin.

Nor will I mourn his knocking cough  
imprisoned, nor his sweats. His wife's pilled afghan  
is too dense for him these nights.

By the lake, he showed me  
how to leap stones over water, call  
a whippoorwill with flutter on our tongues  
so she would answer.

Now wind with no voice left tosses bits of nest:  
sticks and moss like children's curls  
jerked tight, cropped short.