

When Iowa Was Washed Away
with Milk · *Kevin Pilkington*

for my sister

I put down my book
to watch the snow falling
in the backyard.
It started an hour ago
but is already deeper
than Keats.

Downstairs Maureen is baking—
the kitchen, oven warm
and cookie stuffed. I joke
the white spot on her nose is snow
not flour then sit and wait
for the first batch.

After Sinatra, the radio
warns blizzard and I'm warned
to take just one.
I choose an oatmeal shaped
like Iowa, first nibbling
on the northern end of the state
until it cools then chomp south.

When I reach a raisin
that must be Des Moines,
I wash what's left of the state
down with a glass of milk
and begin eyeing Colorado.