

HAPPILY ENDING

They said goodnight. They said goodbye.
They walked the porcupine and watched the moon.

The moon was bright, or would have been
had not the night clouds found a dogfight.

While dampened moonlight crashed through treetops
they walked the porcupine and talked in politic.

They talked erotic. One taught biology.
The other learned it. The talk was taut
and staticky, gunfire
coming in guts and starts.

No more the harmony that once engulfed them
like magnolia-scented salts in a warm bath.

Around the store fronts now ghosted empty,
they walked the porcupine, one soldier-straight,

the other hunched. They turned a corner
into an avenue, their paces scraping

on the pavement as they reached the weathered stairs
to the front porch. They stood apart

white-faced and hushed. They said goodnight.
They said goodbye. They stood mute in soapy quiet,

when somehow quite by accident one dropped the leash.
In crackered moonlight, in sudden freedom

old Mr. Stickers trudged six steps down to his escape.
The other waved a lacy handkerchief

and waved again to waft him on through hasty night
but never turned aside, that when a bird rasped

from foreign branches its best glory,
they said good morning.