

Bad Heart

So you walk along nowhere—
anybody's beach—the air
a rank chowder of low tide
and you're happy. You'd like
to sew yourself a shirt
out of sunlight. You want
to tell your wife you love
her. And you wait for the
telephone in your ear to ring.
For an hour. For a week. Is
abstraction a net or a sieve,
Angel? Is an idea a kiss?
A shape such as maples
make unfurling, or willows
falling? Or a steady river
taking up silt and stone,
showing you in a knot or curl,
depth and speed of channel.

And what does it show
if a Boat-tail still rudders
in the bucking cross-wind of
your head, where you put it
one green middle-western
afternoon ten years ago,
when you were younger,
and she was very young?