

The Footwashing · *David Bottoms*

Air heavy with the odor of flowers,
I sat with my bare feet hanging
over the first bench,
watched light fall through an open window
across the face of a brown guitar, particles
of dust twisting like worms in that light,
and waited for the pail of clear water
to slide across the splintered floor.

Now in this room
on this deep sofa, the last of the fire
crackling like water, you on the cushion
on the floor, long hair draped over my ankle,
my foot cupped in your hands,
the powder, the Christmas cologne,
I remember the hymn the woman sang
in the front of that church,
the way the dust twisted all the way up
that tunnel of light.