

**The Button**

(forthcoming in *Ninth Letter*)

I didn't quite suit him, so my brother  
—without a word, as if it were his shirt—  
popped my top button. I grabbed him by the  
throat—the same way I do all men hurt

by a need to fix me, sieve out the honey from my blood.  
I meant to break him like the sweet promise  
I'd make to any lonely man—horny  
enough to break to me the same promise.

Do we, in our hold, this hug, this pushing,  
not appear as feuding lovers? Brothers,  
yes, yes, are nothing but lovers passing  
blood back and forth in one fight, another.

As if he could love me, I let him bail,  
go retrieve his piece of me from his nail.