

## **The River is Wide**

The stretch of  
                  gray water, bordered by  
                  algae near the riverbank,  
a speckly green path,  
patches the size of my foot, stepping stones,  
and as slippery,  
                  a surface I wouldn't break,  
                  all the icky fish, crayfish, catfish,  
teeming underneath, nibbling bubbles.  
The river could feed an army.

I was an army of one.  
                  Skinny arms and bobbing head:  
                  fighting form (in my mind).

I could walk on water  
(in my dreams).  
When I spoke,  
                  my thoughts pushed  
                  the moist air like reality

I might change.  
Swayed by the power I felt,

I'd board a ferry  
                  to cross the Red River  
                  and staunch the blood.

On the other side, I think,  
I'll try a staying hand on the arm  
raising the gun,  
                  a laying on of hands  
                  to heal spirit. False god,  
you cannot heal someone of mortal wounds  
or change that one who killed.

For him the *I's* not real. Judgment  
    shall find him  
    wanting. I was invisible.  
Silenced. That I held my tongue  
(did I put it down with my courage?).  
I'd say the ferry of grace  
    sank, that I stepped off the prow  
    to swim, thinking to reach  
the willows and sycamore aflutter  
like hands on shore. Maybe waving.

