

**D. GILSON**

**For the Woman I Didn't Marry, on the Day of Her Wedding**

Not everything without order is unruly.  
You've let your hair become a wild land  
left to what will be, the Missouri wind  
in June, thunderstorm season. Kimberly,  
when we drove to the coast of Mississippi  
in your Toyota eating red licorice, I planned  
to give you my mother's ring. I resigned  
myself to root in your earth like an oak tree.

Who knows what knowledge was laid bare  
by those muddy waters. I sleep with men.  
You knew, but waited—such patience!—  
and I thank you. That yellowed night, the air  
shifted course. Imminent storms settled in,  
covered us in hail, froze a part of us in ice.