

MURIEL NELSON
With a big simile

she wrote *he warped his arms around me*
and tickled me. Soon all I *liked* was not
a hymn's "I know" inflection,
guilt perfection, or some
hissing blessing, but errors.
Airs. Apparent selves
of steam. When large birds fooled
through blowing firs, the white
gulls vanished into greens
and came back clouds. Black crows
of crows. They lit where taillights
stared at their red ice. Then flew
where now a sharp arc goes weathering
across the whole blue psyche like . . .
a fighter's contrail. But
it doesn't disappear. Dove-white,
it widens. Whiles. Smiles.
And still it's there. Sky-sized
it's warped to one vast quill
feathering.