

THE REHEARSAL

Again tonight, I took the windy road to Jan's,
And here, in her warm lamplight,
I join the women at the piano,
Laughing, plump, bifocaled,
Singing old love songs.

I leave my skepticism at the door
With my thin jacket, which the wind has worn.
My rugged thoughts go smooth
As they trace the round faces of these women,
Grandmothers, fellow worshippers;
A Buddha smile breathes on my face
For Margaret, our black-haired humorist,
As she offers us her latest joke,
Rustling her bracelets and wide sleeves.

I close my eyes in gratitude.
Suddenly, we are a circle of mermaids,
Clasping hands,
Floating on the shining waves of our vibrato,
Beckoning through Jan's foamy curtains
To the night.

Martha M. Pickrell