

## A Quiet Emptying

A white basin, Chinese etchings  
inside in blue and the lightest brown.  
We washed here for days  
beneath the flapping, orange canvas,  
half naked and dirt-crazy,  
our blue knees hard put to stand  
in the early cold. Coyotes  
ushered on the midnights  
and mornings. Great hawks circled,  
pooling flecks in the blue-dome sky.  
But then a crack, and the days  
wound down until the very last day,  
and the sky too. Quiet, and still cold,  
eyes holding everything, we seeped  
away, slowly, pricked  
by molten blinks of high, black  
stars, our pores etched dry,  
bodies empty, the basin forgotten.

*William Snyder, Jr.*