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## The Black Rose

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## The Black Rose

*Grand Rapids, MI*

The beasts were chained together  
gray leather legs and sides  
cracked with weight and time

a memorial march, a mourning march  
—slow moving, a silent train

walking back-to-trunk  
tails in mouths  
on a barren Sunday street.

In our low tent  
in the middle of the woods  
I lay on you  
and thought of another

I couldn't breathe—  
was collapsing in that nowhere.

Through dark windows of the pub  
we saw Barnum & Bailey, tent down, stakes up  
lead the saddest most beautiful parade  
and it almost brought me back.

But I go crazy in the fall—  
snapping branches  
kicking-up leaves.

It was a good day to give you away—  
the day we watched the elephants  
we sat on the same side of the table  
took food from the same plate.