

## **GRONINGEN FIELD**

(Groningen Field is a vast natural-gas field situated  
near the ancient city of Groningen in Northern Holland)

We cycled that night to a landscape  
Of pylons and flames. Watched the scalding water  
Sluice into ice-cold canals.  
Steam rising like ghostly hedgerows  
Across the flat straight roads.

Johanna, in black wide-brimmed hat,  
Whispers through pursed lips that the stars  
And love are icy passions.

I spread the blanket and describe  
Two paintings by de Chirico, where a girl  
And a prancing foaming horse have the same eyes.  
Until drawing the blanket tight, she says,  
All stories have the same final touches.

The road -our clinging arms,  
The path -our kisses,  
The stunted trees -our pain,  
And in this placid water  
The flat scrutiny of a father's eye.

Cycling home that night,  
We pass through mists of swimming spiders  
Then hear a bird's false dawn.

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