

TWO STOPS BEFORE MINE

We met riding the bus.
You always got off two stops
Before mine. I was taken by
Your beauty; long black hair and
Eyes that could cut through steel.
The Bell Jar clasped in your hands,
Loosely bound, its cover slightly worn.

Later came your battles with the toaster
And then your own arm
So we sat you down in the center of the field
On the white painted "x"
You were learning to cook then,
Going to be shipped off soon
As mail order bride.

That was the year you began to
Guard your own soul, carry it around
Duct taped and foiled in cardboard;
"They can have my body," you would say,
"But they're not going to touch this".

Last time we spoke
You had a giant snake
Coiled around your arm,
I remember asking if you
Could make it dance.

That was the last time we spoke,
However the last time I saw you
You were seated alone at the diner,
It was after you had robbed that Exxon station,
Armed with hockey stick and your voice,

Pocketed the cash and escaped by foot.
[Told the cops you did it because you were
Tired of working at Taco Bell.]

My heart skipped at the sight of you,
Dressed in traditional garb and veil.
I remember pretending I didn't see you.