

*The Poet's Husband***Molly Giles**

**H**e sits in the front row, large, a large man with large hands and large ears, dry lips, fresh-cut hair, pink skin, clear eyes that don't blink, a nice man, calm, that's the impression he gives, a quiet man who knows how to listen; he is listening now as she sways on the stage in a short black dress and reads one poem about the time she slit her wrists and another poem about a man she still sees and a third poem about a cruel thing he himself said to her six years ago that she never forgot and never

understood, and he knows that when she is finished everyone will clap and a few, mostly women, will come up and kiss her, and she will drink far too much wine, far too quickly, and all the way home she will ask, "What did you think, what did you really think?" and he will say, "I think it went very well"—which is, in fact, what he does think—but later that night, when she is asleep, he will lie in their bed and stare at the moon through a spot on the glass that she missed.