

# Quaker Prayer

*Mike Lawson*

When Grandma said  
Thanksgiving grace  
I listened

to the ballgame  
turned down.

When Dad asked  
to join hands  
in silent prayer,

eyes shut,  
I smelled green bean steam,  
heard Uncle Don wheeze,  
held his hand  
for the first time;  
prehistoric sagging skin  
on small bones,  
moist palm,  
a counterpoint pulse.

I squinted a look.  
Staring at me,  
he stuck out his tongue.

Dad said, "Amen."