

*Amy Reynolds*

## **When She Was Out**

Striking the match  
is the first satisfaction.  
The little snap,  
blue flame creeping  
up the wooden stick  
to bite your finger  
and you must  
fling it away.  
Such a little fire,  
only the rose patterned  
wall paper and the ivory  
damask drapes  
crackling.  
The explosion of  
mother's flower  
garden dresses.

*Honorable Mention,  
American Academy of Poets, 1990*

## Quickening

I have always been  
here, inside you,  
even in the germ  
of yourself  
uncurling in the dark  
center of the one  
who carried you,  
blind, reptilian, to light;  
and in her foremother  
I waited for this day  
when I could touch  
the curve of sky  
I thought was endless,  
my heel at the root  
of your quickening heart.