

Lisken Van Pelt Dus  
Trading Stories

Over shared late-night wine  
our pasts swell up into one story  
after another: how you won  
your multi-colored coat at arm-wrestling,

how I came to be married, and even,  
since I'm feeling unrestrained,  
how I locked my keys into the car  
twice in one day. I lean

across the table and listen to you tell  
about the moose you shot  
three miles from the highway and  
how in god's name will you get it

out of there. You do, eventually,  
but I'm not with you. I'm  
in the forest where I have slipped  
into your skin. Who cares

what's true? Here salmon plunge  
upstream and feast on gulps of air,  
my pockets are full of mottled pebbles,  
and I can kiss anyone. Anyone at all.