

# on again off again

Carly Marlys

Will you go downtown with me,  
a little drunk but not too much,  
dressed in jeans and shoulder-free  
running before me up sticky back stairs.

I could be your leprechaun in plaid.  
Listen to my friends. They know how long  
I've liked you. They say the words I can't.  
Stop smiling so my heart can slow.

But be my cherry-wine sparkling sip of  
poor taste music and pitched sugar-sweet,  
my bible girl with the shining eyes,  
clasped hands on red-draped knees.

You're the remnant of early-morning dark—  
refractive stripes and close-shaved heads,  
my stuffed-mouth secrets and later-tell mistakes.  
My glass-cased girl, my first and final year.