

## LOUISE

We were in Manila. I was five, or maybe six.  
There was a hurricane, a slate gray sky  
and a howling wind  
tearing at everything in its path,  
breaking the world into pieces  
and tossing the fragments to earth and air.

I stood at the screen door of the kitchen,  
listening to everyone yell at my mother,  
Louise! Come inside! Come inside!  
But she refused.

She lay down on a cot  
in the big tent out there behind the house  
and there she stayed.  
The wind bore down, fierce, wild, relentless.  
It ripped away the bricks  
from the wall beside the tent,  
but Louise would not move  
from her chosen spot.

And the bricks  
the wind  
nothing  
dared  
touch her.