

## THIRD PLACE

**Marge Vining**

### ALLEGHENY

The muffled clanging of the barge chain slapped the water  
And my ears  
Now the brakes screech as the truck lurches to a stop  
And the gurgle of the poling as the barge glides across  
And the grinding against the sand as the barge reaches the other  
side of Allegheny River.

All this muffled through white fog born of Allegheny River  
I shiver—the mist touches me coldly.

A breeze dimples Allegheny gliding grey blue  
And shatters the sun into shooting stars  
And rinses the heat from my face  
From the barge swaying I watch the oak trees and  
Black-eyed Susans and the Queen Anne's lace framing my river.  
And listen to the clear voices.

The barge rests in the sand  
The mists sleep on the water  
and mute the katydids  
and bullfrogs calling to me  
Wisps of men's voices as they  
sit by the barge  
If I look out I see flickers of  
Delaware's fire  
guarding my river Allegheny