

*Possum*

*for Mike Harrah*

Sharing an escaped past  
that night visiting back in Ohio,  
we sat past midnight on the damp grass  
drinking to the swell of our futures.

Moon-silent, like a ghost  
conjured by the charms of memory—  
a possum our being there startled  
into flight down the lawn's slope,

his white body blurring, light  
sliding from him like a snail's track.  
We broke from our trance to chase  
and lose him in a wood. Coming back

breathing hard with the satisfaction  
of giving our ghost a good run,  
we complained that the past should haunt us.  
Yet within us we had heard a calling,

knew now what we should have known  
from the rounding of our thoughts.  
Threatened, the possum trusted to instinct:  
Showing us the way, he headed home.