

JOSEPH MCLAUGHLIN

Letter to My Wife #50

Once we were peasants of the middle-West,
Sitting at the bar (daring woman), sipping
The sweet syrup of cherry-vodka & *Squirt*.

That was before this era of sophistication:
Bottles of *Michelob* & hamburgers from *Bassetti's*,
Naked in bed under "Frieze From a Chinese Tomb."
Long before this golden bitterness
Of style, hops, & sliced, white onions.

Now, when I thrust the sweating, amber bottle
Between your breasts,
You surround it easily, not even flinching
From the cold,

Warming the glass as you once would my hand
From Ohio's winter night.