

What I Know

I know the familiar ten-mile feel in my legs
at the start of a race. I know the bass line of Corelli's
Christmas Concerto and Pachelbel's Canon in D.
I know white wine, cold beer, hazelnut coffee—black.

I can navigate Kansas City rush hour in the rain. I have
packed my suitcases at midnight and traveled through
dark. I know children's first words and the stories that
follow. My lips know the stain of fresh berries.

I have crossed the Mississippi when its banks
were downtown buildings and farms; I have seen
a double sun dog gracing the sky on a winter day.
I know shooting stars, moss roses, jasmine tea.

I've watched six yellow finches at the feeder at dawn,
I've viewed a solar and a lunar eclipse from the same bridge.
I know how towels stiffen on the line in the summer sun;
I know Oklahoma wind, Iowa cold,

the silence of good byes that are too hard to say.
I once met an angel who entered my second-floor class
through a window. I know grass always forgets,
but trees hold their memories forever.

I know I love dancers and skiers,
and women who know what they know.
And I honor those women who are only beginning
to learn.

