

## Passing Through Albuquerque

At dusk, by the irrigation ditch  
gurgling past backyards near the highway, locusts raise  
a maze of calls in cottonwoods.

A Spanish girl in a white party dress strolls the  
levee by the muddy water where her small  
sister plunks in stones.

Beyond a low adobe wall and a wrecked car men are  
pitching horseshoes in a dusty lot. Someone shouts as  
he clangs in a ringer.

Big winds buffet in ahead of a storm, rocking the  
immense trees and whipping up clouds of dust,  
wild leaves, and cottonwool.

In the moment when the locusts pause and the girl presses  
her up-fluttering dress to her bony knees you can hear a  
banjo, guitar, and fiddle

playing "The Mississippi Sawyer" inside a shack. Moments  
like that, you can love this country.