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Teacher's Husband

The students carry home her outlines and charts,
knowledge distilled to sudden windowpanes;

but he knows her joy when she strokes their cat,
school work shaken in the wind,

the stillness of her fingers, surrender
to glinting fur, tangible things,

his body held in hands so warm
he can peel off all defences,

laughter like flocks of clouds
out in the spring sky
to eat the first warm suns.

And he does not see
her briefcase, her papers, her eyes
changed by the classroom, her shoes

to enter and walk across strange stories
unbuttoning the heroes' woolen coats,

but fleeting moments of possession: fresh marguerites,
offered unabashed before they settle down.

Liliane Welch
Sackville, New Brunswick