



### THREE AMISH HENS

It's difficult to describe the pure pleasure  
Afforded by three rust-colored hens  
Mucking and murmuring in one's coop.  
But, for you, I will try.

Their inscrutable, dinosaur eyes  
And cruel feet, coupled with their  
Thoroughly domestic quilt of feathers  
And seemingly marrowless weight  
Fascinates like first light  
When the day is still  
Full of juice and potential.

Easily tricked, they will fall for  
Distraction and run, flat-out,  
For faked food flinging, so one  
Can open the gate and clean.  
Not bright animals, they fold  
When one holds them firmly,  
Giving up like movie heroines  
When the hero eventually gets them  
In a final lip-lock. After all  
That riotous alarm, outraged  
As old concertinas squashed.

It's difficult, also, to say  
Why one day I pulled over, on a whim  
At the trim, blue-curtained farmhouse  
And waited while the tickhounds  
Stopped sounding and a shy, hatted  
Boy approached.  
Why I bought three chicks  
For five dollars, and a bale  
Of straw for another buck fifty, plus  
A small bag of feed in case I  
Sobered up and had to make  
A quick return.  
Except that pleasure  
Is so fleeting, even in summer,  
And how can one refuse  
Oneself something so easy  
And tender and warm?

- Norma Gay Prewett