Under Ursa Minor

We knotted blades of grass on Mackinac Island
instead of buying blocks of fudge. Here, I learned

what it was like to kiss the clouds rising from the south
because they pinacled the Mackinac Island Bridge

and held me in their arms
but I couldn’t hold them back.

Back at school under Ursa Minor,
I showed her how to climb a sycamore,

she pointed out three satellites from the branches
in the not-yet-midnight star-polluted sky.

If I took off my glasses, the stars crumbled
together like the static of a one channel television

but I could still point out Orion’s Belt, Cassiopeia, Polaris,
Vega (the fifth brightest star in the sky), and Ursa Minor

in the charms around her neck. We won’t break like fevers,
thermometer of red mercury, cleft of light—

if the sun rises tomorrow, it’ll be from the arches
of her throat in the form of a whisper:

a quiet surrender to the sky.