

Carrying a Snake to the Garden

In the cellar was the smallest snake I have ever seen.
It coiled itself in a corner
and watched me with eyes
like two little stars set into coal,
and a tail that quivered.
One step of my foot
and it fled like a running shoelace,
but a scoop of the wrist and I had it in my hand.

I was sorry for the fear,
so I hurried upstairs
and out the kitchen door
to the warm grass and the sunlight and the garden.
It turned and turned in my hand but when I put it down it didn't move.
I thought it was going to flow
up my leg and into my pocket.
I thought, for a moment, as it lifted its face,
it was going to sing.
And then it was gone.