

Meeting Your Parents in Love Valley

14 churches in 3 miles,
we're not in Chapel Hill anymore.

Acres of cows mulling over grass
and people mulling over cows.

Your folks are not impressed
with anything about me.

Sweetie, wear jeans next time,
so you can ride the horses.

They want to know just when
we're going to get serious and settle down.

Your father guides me into his truck,
hand at the small of my back.

They leave us in a half-built house
they've forgotten to put doors on.

At night, we listen to a pack of feral dogs
getting closer, closer:

entering, they circle the stairs
sniffing, growling, but never coming up.