

CLIP

Monday, May 15, Sappho, WA –  
a logging chapter is closed. Those

country maidens were good riders,  
flowers blooming in an old bathtub,

cows grazing in an orchard. Garments  
wet as they should be. Across the dirt

road, peasant girls on the front porch,  
a town of five houses – oh, anyone

would want  
to live

in the fenced area nearby. Anyone,  
wet dress around her feet.

Her dress about her ankles, an old  
bathtub. In the front yard, horses

munch grass. What wench, country-  
fried at the side of the highway, has

electricity, television, a telephone – oh,  
it's for the birds! What rustic girl

plans to enter her prize quarter-  
horse in races this summer? She's

never known anything but logging  
trucks, she doesn't even draw her

gown across her feet.

Water flowers bloom. Country girls  
turn north at Sappho, go to Pysht,

spend time darning holes in wool  
socks and wondering, why would

anyone pull rags  
over her ankles?

What girl wants to live in nearness  
to fishing? What country girl is un-

spoiled nature?

Young mothers by choice, they  
hear about it three days later. They

still don't pull the cloth over  
their feet.

Down Highway 101 a piece, what  
country girl says you can do these

things in cities, small-town life is  
all I want to know? They front on

the old houses for truckers and  
tourists, tearing down the last

of the company shacks. What  
girl waits like a wife for wet

attackers, spinning yarns from  
her country dress? Oh,

that girl gathers it up with artless  
grace. You can still see a girl's feet

at Sappho. You can see the owner  
of the company store.

Those girls would sit, eating clams.  
Soft blossoms, simple dresses

in a line on the ground. Maybe  
loggers and their families shot

deer, bear, elk – some  
girl in the area.

Why would anyone want to live  
when May 1 the post office closes

forever? Those girls lay claim to  
time. Backward and forward, their

hemlines sweeping the ground.