

Midwest Writing Center  
Davenport, IA  
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*Midwest Writing Center Press*

Midwest Writing Center is a nonprofit literary organization located in Davenport, Iowa, primarily serving western Illinois and eastern Iowa with a mission of “Fostering appreciation of the written word, supporting and educating its creators.” We promote new literary voices as well as work from previously published writers. MWC is a resource for readers and writers alike.

*Mississippi Valley Poetry Chapbook  
2012 Competition Winner*

*Acknowledgments*

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*Flyway: Journal of Writing & Environment: "Days on Horses"*

*The Michigan Poet: "Hay Season"*

*Poecology: "Before Sleep" and "Apple Season"*

*In Memory of Gladys Morse Hunter  
1907-1999*

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*Before Sleep*

Late September, frost warning.  
You cover your cosmos  
with a bed sheet,

lumpy white ghost I watch  
from the casement windows  
of my father's boyhood bedroom.

I hope to see the sheet rise and fall –  
long exhalation of oxygen,  
last breath of summer –

or the moon burn through  
that thin cotton membrane,  
but I fall asleep pressed

between unending layers:  
stratum of stars and indigo sky,  
wood smoke and frost,

apples and late-blooming annuals,  
and roots, tangles of roots  
twisting around each other

beneath clods of cool soil,  
trussing everything, all of us,  
together.