

1975

Fettuccine

Brenda Hillman

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of history.
I imagine you bending over them,
suddenly amazed.
Putting them into your satchel

to hoard wonder and shyness
as if they were wives.
And on the banks of the pond,
an old choir

of elms, singing from
the frozen earth as you passed.
To the rest of the world, friend,
those lilies were fresh.

Fettuccine / Brenda Hillman

for JF

The pasta drips down in degrees,
slung over a cord to dry in various lengths,
a strange pipe organ, bleached white.

He smells his grandmother's house
in the bowl. The dough hardens, but he forces
submission, with a rolling pin;

they'll soften by our supptime.
And where he hangs them, the air
looks slashed and yellowed, old papers

or stalactites in a well-lit cave.
They'll stand up on their own
till they're cooked down.

Meanwhile, what creamy
splinters in our home! What unique bones!
As if his whole past bared its teeth at once.

And he puts his face close, into the dough,
to sense how much he's grown. And with
what sticks he is staving off hunger.