

**A Secret Place in the Woods
That Only the Natives Know About**

I have a pet wolf
no bigger than my palm
who curls up on my belly at night to sleep.

I try not to disturb him
for he hates to be bothered
with the memory of grass

and dirt.
He told me one night of
an Indian Mound. His Indian Mound.

He skulked there where the dry
February breeze coerced
last Autumn's leaves to dance
in ceremonial firelight.

They scraped and fluttered
gyrating into the hollow of the dirt hill
and he watched the ghosts

of Shawnee Indians
crumble into his earth.

My wolf whines at the mention of the beechwoods
and the maples and the oaks
and he hates the grass that no longer grows under their
impenetrable roof.

The wolf on my belly often growls
deep in his throat
at the approaching dawn.

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