

*The Big Fear*

every woman  
I've ever been with  
has one thing  
in common

it is a fear –  
a fear that I myself have known

but this fear  
lives within  
them

it has its thumb  
over them  
like the shadow  
of a willow tree  
against the backdrop  
of a sinister mansion

and it wraps itself around  
each pinky finger  
and each pinky toe

making its way  
to the brain and  
embedding itself  
in their minds

it can be seen  
in their reflections  
yet they do not  
see it

it is inside  
every *I love you*  
and every *I do*  
yet they do not  
hear it

they cling to others  
for help without realizing it

man after man  
until they're bent and folded  
like an old twenty dollar bill

it is a fear  
unfounded,  
a fear  
unbounded

it is a fear  
everyone must face

it is the fear of being  
alone

a l o n e  
a l  
o n  
e  
a  
l  
o  
n  
e  
alone  
a l a  
l l  
o o  
n n  
e e  
enola  
ae  
l n  
o  
*alone*