

# Invocation

by Jean Janzen

*The Frisians still keep cows  
in their houses, down the hall.  
I hear them bawling in first light,  
and turn in my guestbed.*

*I'm in childhood again,  
tossing on flour-sack sheets,  
But now the milky dawn  
pulls me back into dream--*

*a congregation of cows is joining  
mine; doors swing open,  
the bulky bodies shift among us,  
hooves and horns, as we make room*

*and embrace them, our faces pressing  
against the wide bellies. All of us  
fed and washed under one roof,  
singing together at dawn,*

*our longing and need rising  
into the rafters. All of us  
in the field, grazing and lying  
down together in the cool,*

*redolent mud until a child  
calls us, and we follow,  
single-file, udders and tails  
swinging us home.*

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