

AUTUMN STORIES

We pulled old wool
from attic trunks—
musty with forgotten smoke—
and wrapped ourselves
like refugees
in Stromsburg, Nebraska.

At night,
we ran under trees
that quaked louder
than we did,
our voices vanishing
into the hollow hush
just behind us.

The moon
licked at the river.

The leaves
whipped past
like something
breaking loose.

Later,
you told stories
of people I'd misplaced—
cousins, lovers,
some kid who wrecked his bike

A HUSH BETWEEN SEASONS

outside a church.

I didn't care much for them.

But your voice
held night air,
dusty highways,
gas stations
where someone always
waited.

When I thought I'd lost
what I thought was love,
you were there—
a shoulder in a Lubbock laundromat,
your shirt going cold
under my face.

I can't remember what you said.
Just that you stood beside me
when I married her.

Later still—
warming yourself
in our living room,
you spoke softly to my wife.

Something stayed
in the fabric—
a scent,
a sentence
folded into the curtains,
tucked between cushions.

We go back to it,
some evenings,
when the wind starts early

SCOTT SIMPSON

and the house cools too soon.

We remember your legs
crossed like a closing door,
your pause
before answering.

We always wanted
to hug you
before you left.