From This Ground

Dixie Partridge

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From This Ground

A visible wind slow-rivers down slopes of Rattlesnake Mountain, purples the ridge at the silt edge of sun. Horse Heaven Hills green into wheatfield and orchard, and the Interstate between glints back sides of semis, headlights wicking on . . . a long and moving constellation.

My lives split directions from this ground. From mountains back in Wyoming my daughters have salvaged wagon wheels, slats of barn wood waiting to be handed down branded with their grandfather’s iron: *diamond-four*, no longer in use. And suddenly our children are states away into college and next lives.

A hawk startles into dive . . . rises . . . something dark and small taloned over scents of sage, clumps of phlox holding last rays like fluorescence. As sky’s distant dust blossoms into twilight, an old farm building to the east comes visible, collapsing in on itself like a permanent exhale.

What’s changing around me seems not of arrival, but leave taking. For a moment between light and dark it lets me recall something more than I know, moves me unwary toward altered borders.

—Dixie Partridge