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My Son's Guitar Class

Darlene Young

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My Son's Guitar Class

is tucked above a carpet store
on a busy street with no parking
so that I come in panting

with the smell of traffic in my clothes,
tight-necked from the argument in the car
because this boy won't be hurried.

But, settled on a bench in the back, I
watch him bend to his patterning. Soon
the walls disappear into feathered strummings

that eddy around my ankles, pile gauzy in corners
like cottonwood. I wish I could tuck
a gentle tendril against my wrist

to pull from my sleeve and wave, a white flag,
whenever I feel my jaw clench
at this boy. He arches his neck

over the trailing crochet of music,
gazing off at something
beyond us both.

—Darlene Young

This poem won third place in the 2017 Clinton F.
Larson Poetry Contest.