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Out Like a Lamb

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The hot wind takes one final gasp and drops to the ground, leaving the dust to settle over the rusted Ford, over the green and gold aluminum trailer, over the pot of withered flowers; letting all these things disappear into the tired earth. A woman wipes the dust from her hands onto the print of her skirt, looking up for clouds she knows won't come for weeks.

Kerri Meyer   Out Like a Lamb

Leaning against the rough bark of the elm, I peer up through the naked, broken branches to the clear sky beyond them, black on blacker yet. When I squint, I see the mottled blue-white stars, the mercury lights on life's other porches, blinking on so early these quick winter nights. I can ignore the piles of grey snow made bright by moonlight because I can feel the damp clay slip just slightly under my boot, because my breath is invisible again, because I am secretly restless.

I know that it is over, and I smile.

I look on the broom star one last time, committed now to its headlong dive into the horizon. I smile my good-byes to Orion and imagine him falling slowly down behind the spring house, behind the sycamore trees, down through the softening earth to the underworld, where he will lie in wait until September's freeze.