

Pastoral

I knew a field named Eurydice,
which every field resembles after dark,
where we would walk in dawning days,
another way of saying *youth*. That arrow
we let fly without a thought, towards blurred
significance, had missed the mark. Not to say
that our years have a point but are more akin
to a bullet hole. The first one I ever saw was
in a coyote my grandfather shot. Point of entry,
of exit, of no return. A little blood flecked
on the fieldgrass. The marks we see are all
that's left behind as evening takes everything,
another way of saying *night*. When I turned
to look, she was dust. The field, that is.
The field that *was*. A salt-lick dropped
in the dirt behind the little truck. The truck
my father got after they took his old man's keys.
He would drive those distant miles to the farm
to feed his father's cows and give them water,
the springtime ruins of Alabama filling
the cab, bringing the poverty he felt
for that field into view. They sold the cows
before my grandfather bought the farm,
another way of saying *died*. The grass
grew long as the hayrick filled with wasps
and then collapsed from rot and gravity,
another way for entropy to show its heft,
but only with what we leave behind
and glance back at as frost stiffens and crumbles
beneath the thick-hooved weight of time.