

# One Method of Hope

*Todd Robert Petersen*

The only motion here is an old  
Dodge pickup leading a coil  
of white exhaust across  
the horizon—a snow-dusted  
road—crosshatched and barren  
farm land. You point your jaw  
and your etched-out eyes  
across the wheel, overlooking  
the one wire-limbed hickory  
on the rise and the flock  
of nervous geese that wanders  
in a patch of late-winter ice  
and corn stubble. Your gaze  
is steady. You never catalogued  
the pain of your losses  
or claimed a vacant stratosphere.  
There's comfort in that.  
Yours isn't the only way to endure  
a savage flurry of solemnities, it is  
one way, one voice that you recall,  
one parable of grief corroding  
direction, but on your life  
you can't remember where you  
heard it first. There is a raw  
and unchecked safety in accelerating  
down a lone and narrow ribbon  
of this bleak and unbending world.  
You're still hours from home.  
The anonymous beauty  
of your solitude fades to twilight  
before it can start to mean  
what you really want it to.