

Utah Territory, 1893

Maureen Clark

A washed cup,
folded socks,
three unworn shirts
with no scent of him.
Smooth bedsheets,
dry towels.

She begins to know
something of scapegoats;
those who are left
to wander in the desert
unburned.

This desert
is not a rose.
Petals fall
uncounted
from the catalpa.
All the grasses
are in Nebraska
blowing westward
in silver waves.

Unmended fence,
empty barn
two children in the yard
quick as sparrows
between sun and shade.

Smoke ascends
from the lamps,
gathers at the ceiling,
soot ghosting
the walls.