Tanka: Upon Finding Out the Colorado Springs Murderer Is a Mormon

Hilary Brown

I could have argued
recipes with his mother
over funeral
potatoes or watched him fold
more than his share of gray chairs
at a fireside or
anyone’s baby blessing
I could have nudged him
when we told the story of
laying down weapons of war
are you getting this?
I could have said, then again
he could have nudged me
when they spoke of musket fire,
a Prophet’s proclamation
he could have asked me
the same thing after each hymn
marching as to war
with the cross of Jesus
going on before
yes, well . . .
we’ve made our choices.

HILARY BROWN (hilaryawbrown@gmail.com) was born in Salt Lake City and is the oldest of six sisters. She graduated from Utah State University and is a proud public school teacher in a border town. Her current project is a memoir written in verse detailing her personal experiences with scrupulosity. Hilary lives in Arizona with her husband, Neil, and two-year-old daughter, Audrey.