

GRAVITY

The tractor hums
its own atmosphere.
Out here,
it's the only sound.
In junior high,
he read sci-fi like scripture—
moon buggies
floating over ash craters,
dust lifting,
hanging,
thinking about leaving.
Earth—
a blue eye on the edge.
Now:
black soil rises,
falls behind him
like breath,
like hair.
He knows the smell
better than his wife.
At Big Red Café,
the men trade short truths:
Yeap.
Looks like it.

A HUSH BETWEEN SEASONS

They'll move in next week.

Not talk—
just gravity.

But out here
there's no tether.

The radio blurs—
Tanya,
a hymn,
then static.

The cab holds him
like a sealed dome.

Left:
land waiting.

Right:
land broken.

Always,
he's in between.

He cuts the engine.
Silence.

The wind steps in.

A jet—
a low roar,
a far thread
in the sky.

Too slow.

Too fast.

Already gone
ahead of its sound.

I'm alone,
he thinks.

SCOTT SIMPSON

No one's coming.
He fumbles for the keys.
They fall.
Clink,
then nothing.
Buried
in the soft dirt
fourteen feet below.
The sun behind him.
Door open.
He climbs down.
Boots sink.
Soil takes him in.
He walks forward—
tripping,
arms wide,
like a man
spinning
through space
with nothing to hold
but the field
he can't
ever
leave.