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Neck of the World

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WINNOWING

Between alike fingertips
a match springs its will
into contour and relief:
whatnots of hill and sage,
the desert night sliding coolly
into the noisy shades
of an open coat sleeve—
the languorous coming-to
of rust and starlight
on emotionless train cars
tugging green and again
green names into darkness.

Still, into the low
carved system of systems
the world dissolves—
minerals scraping skin and leaf
till ghosts of every bone
tilt in some remote heaven.

Still, ordinary sands
shift under wind, thunder
rustles its latent wraiths,
the sky a zero shrinking in.