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It Happened in Andy's Trading Post, Billings

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IT HAPPENED IN ANDY'S TRADING POST, BILLINGS

for Andy Clair de Lune

Your father sang in 40 Sun Dances,
he wore a bear claw necklace.
You do not belong to this dim town.
Your long legs could roll away valleys
where children cluster, drawn to your voice,
bright beads about your waist.

It must have been a bear that spoke to you,
that young night under Pine Tree
when moonlight sifted over you like sleep.
When your left eye saw what the right would not,
you in your store, with no grass or wind,
poems instead of children spinning in your hands.
Saw and could not bear to see
and let the thin film drop.
The bear pitied you, took that eye
and sewed it into your heart.

In this town your fingers feed stars to open mouths.
Your heart flows moonsong to the wind,
grows too large for your huge hands.
You stand here, fill our heads with light.
Song spills through your bear-colored eye.