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Max the Tire King

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Max the Tire King

Hardly an empire. Rims
and tubes of things, a kingdom of air.
Max is dead. His daughter would sell
the ramshackle land, the coiled towers
of tires, if only the will
had not made this a refuge.
While the lawyers argue
against the codicil, I drive past
the abandoned office, the fences,
the billboard with its hyperbole.
It is March, overcast, unpretty.
The tires settle in drifts
like old men turning from the wind.
In his last days, patient
with the inconstant cancer,
Max would wander through the yards,
hands in his pockets, or feeling
for treads. He would come home late,
locking the tall barbed-wire gates
against the perpetual threat of vandals.