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Roadkill at Willowcreek Bridge

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Roadkill at Willowcreek Bridge

I must have been seven the day
a speeding truck bounced
through the flock
and sheep exploded
like dandelions. Entrails
coiled. Blood turned
the highway rust. I walked
between the woolly mounds
listening to the silences
that came painfully between
the breaths. When a ewe kicked
over the edge, slid down
the embankment into the creek and blew
bubbles, her insides
dragging in the sand after, I waded out
and lifted her head: heavy
in my hands,
she taught the need
of letting go until my fingers
failed, and her nostrils
returned to the water.
Exhausted, I rubbed the feeling
into my feet again
and knew there are things
that will never be whole as I looked
at her gut,
looped on the bank beside me
empty as my mother's
pink plastic purse.

Mervin Mecklenburg