If Your Real Father Drove the Car For Bonnie and Clyde

Marcie Goldsby
IF YOUR REAL FATHER
DROVE THE CAR FOR BONNIE AND CLYDE

You would fight the grain
which lures you like an old hawk
chasing a young jack rabbit into a field
of lovegrass. Your father
splintered in that hot soil.
You make a religion
of the mossy side
of cedars, move north.
Plant field corn
conserving moisture, invest in dairy cattle
things that shine.
What if the land slides
the skin
off your father's face. His strong body falls
into your lap
wrinkles your cotton dress,
his vocal cords vibrate an old song
about going home. You follow him back
to guns laid on the table like silverware,
you polish his boots.
Fast plans drawn with your black crayon
shatter daisies
on the kitchen wall. A kachina windchime
puts you to bed
on the screened-in back porch, jangles
the night loose, brings shadows of Kansas
Oklahoma and Arkansas within reach. Armadillos
carry the farm off
bit by bit.