

## On His Case Tractor

Dana Yost

This is him now,  
driving the small Case  
tractor with orange-creme-colored fenders and no cab,  
bouncing out of the low hills of the South Dakota land  
back to the farm house on the Minnesota side,  
dust and kicked-up grasshoppers trailing  
like contrails before settling back into the land.

This is him,  
the man who would have been something,  
who spoke a loud stream of words –  
proclamations and declarations – to the cows,  
the stars, his friends, he and the lot of them drunk on Saturday nights,  
resting against the big wall of hay bales. Why wait  
for destiny, he'd say, when we can seize our fate,  
our course, ourselves? Why, those bastards running things  
now don't know a goddamned thing. Work hard, I say.  
Study up. Pay attention. Then, when the day comes,  
we'll show them. When the day comes.

This is him *now*,  
bouncing in the small Case  
tractor, late for supper because a gate  
wouldn't close on the pasture in the South Dakota land,  
and he cut his hand shoving it into place.

Him now, small like the Case, bouncing on the dirt road, kicked-up dust on his tongue, drying his throat, small against the shadow of trees falling wide across the road at sunset. The man who would have been something, late for supper, his six children hungry but quietly obedient, hands folded as they wait for him to wash up, baseball gloves and porcelain dolls on their laps, wait because his presence, sweat-stained and dust-covered, is still something to them.



## Peeking Through

Alison Simon