

The Night My Uncle Called the Cops

Sara Henning

For Ron

The night my uncle called the cops,
I put a gun into my mouth.
I wanted desperately to love the world.
I was my mother's beautiful girl.

I put a gun into my mouth.
He told the officer I cased his Jeep.
I was my mother's beautiful girl.
I watched him sip gin from a coffee cup.

He told the officer I cased his Jeep.
I loosened a lug nut. I ice-picked his tire.
I watched him sip gin from a coffee cup.
She tried to kill me, he said. She tried to kill me.

I loosened a lug nut, I ice-picked his tire—
his lies sweet-slow on his tongue.
She tried to kill me, he said. She tried to kill me.
I was seventeen. He hated my mother.

His lies sweet-slow on his tongue.
Lights from the cop's car glittered the sky.
I was seventeen. He hated my mother.
My uncle grinned. The cop took a drag from his Marlboro.

Lights from the cop's car glittered the sky.
I thought of Kurt Cobain.
My uncle grinned. The cop took a drag from his Marlboro.
My uncle murmured – *Honey, your life is already over.*

I thought of Kurt Cobain,
his eyes like a river's brusque blow.
I couldn't unhear that murmur – *Honey, your life is already over.*
That night, I touched my lips to metal.

My eyes, once, were like a river's brusque blow.
I wanted desperately to love the world.
I touched my lips to metal
the night my uncle called the cops.