

## My Son's Guitar Class

is tucked above a carpet store  
on a busy street with no parking  
so that I come in panting

with the smell of traffic in my clothes,  
tight-necked from the argument in the car  
because this boy won't be hurried.

But, settled on a bench in the back, I  
watch him bend to his patterning. Soon  
the walls disappear into feathered strummings

that eddy around my ankles, pile gauzy in corners  
like cottonwood. I wish I could tuck  
a gentle tendril against my wrist

to pull from my sleeve and wave, a white flag,  
whenever I feel my jaw clench  
at this boy. He arches his neck

over the trailing crochet of music,  
gazing off at something  
beyond us both.

—Darlene Young

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This poem won third place in the 2017 Clinton F. Larson Poetry Contest.