

Sleeping Out at the Farm

August nights in Wyoming raise a cold dew.
We return for clarity: visible heavens
mapped with stars,
thick slush of the milky way
across Salt River Range.

We lie before moonrise
under grandmother-quilts, our bodies curved
over feather ticks from the attic.
Through fences, my father's last few Angus—
shipped to market—seem still to move,
invisible and real.

Birthplace, pasture, creek bed,
hills . . . we float with nebulae
as the east grows pale,
cirrus moving in with a wafer moon.
We dissolve toward sleep
with high-altitude cloud,
our lives a faint cluster of plenty.

—Dixie Partridge