From This Ground

A visible wind slow-rivers down slopes
of Rattlesnake Mountain,
purples the ridge at the silt edge of sun.
Horse Heaven Hills green into wheatfield
and orchard, and the Interstate between
glints back sides of semis, headlights wicking on . . .
a long and moving constellation.

My lives split directions from this ground.
From mountains back in Wyoming
my daughters have salvaged wagon wheels,
slats of barn wood waiting to be handed down
branded with their grandfather's iron:
diamond-four, no longer in use.
And suddenly our children are states away
into college and next lives.

A hawk startles into dive . . . rises . . .
something dark and small taloned
over scents of sage, clumps of phlox
holding last rays like fluorescence.
As sky's distant dust blossoms into twilight,
an old farm building to the east
comes visible, collapsing in on itself
like a permanent exhale.

What's changing around me
seems not of arrival, but leave taking.
For a moment between light and dark
it lets me recall something more
than I know, moves me
unwary toward altered borders.

—Dixie Partridge