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Bones

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Bones

By Chloe Miller-Bess

When you came to me the ground was soft,
our summers were mild, the cabbage roses my mother
planted in the front yard were blooming,
and the small string of Apple trees that lined our dirt road
were ripening.

When you came to me the old white washed cottage
my grandfather built was home. The crunch of your pickup
rolling up the drive in a cloud of dust and the heavy soles
of your boots against the hard earth were the only sounds for miles.
The smoky bar with the weak overhead lamps that hung low
was our second home. We sought comfort in its dark shadowed
corners, pretending to be strangers falling in love before last call.

But if you could see me now you would see an empty white
cottage and dusty dirt road no longer lined with trees.
The soft ground now dry and hard in the scorching sun,
and cabbage roses gone.
If you could see me now you would see the rosy lights
of the old bar burnt out, the front door boarded up,
and the wooden marquee hanging precariously above it.

If you could see me now you would see the bones you buried
the winter before you left. I dug them up with the dull nails
of my fingers thinking I could put them back together.
I thought I could replant the cabbage roses and restore the small line
of apple trees. But at the end of the summer I left—
I took the bones with me and some of the apple seeds and disappeared
in the dust and gravel like you did those many months before.