

# Letter From a Nevadan Transplant

Delaney Uronen

First time I crash landed in the desert  
blue sagebrush nipped at my ankles,  
cold elbows darted in and out of spotty moonlight,  
and squat mountaintops— those strange  
pedestals to solidity's final absence—  
peered at me out of some indifferent forever.

By the time I finally stumbled into town  
there were lichen-covered gravestones to decode  
and Civil War horses to contend with.  
There were scrappy grouse  
who deftly avoided dancing hooves  
in the city square and, I swear,  
tried to warn me of the storm to come.

The clouds swelled, hummed deep electric.  
Instead of smart shelter I climbed  
the highest point I could find,  
steeled my body and bared my teeth  
until lightning filled the basin to tie  
me up with low hills and power lines.

When I got back west over the Sierras  
all of my compasses spun silly as the wind.  
So here I find myself, *again*:  
pockets full of the rusty nails  
I'd hoped to avoid all along,  
bare trees glittering pink at dawn.