

# On The Lam

Hannah Pritchard

Driving to Topeka, profession  
of love and boredom  
settles in irrigation ditches,  
words barred in the confines of the plains.

Uncle pours his anger  
into the ash cakes buried beneath the embers,  
familiar exploration of resentment  
and its combustible properties, stirring  
coals with cleaver, girlfriend with promise  
of breaking out. Toil

chimes up through the smoke,  
Uncle unsure whether to buy gas  
or Pall Malls, shrugging  
oil off his shoulders like a pelican,  
beak filled with proclamations  
and anti-government agenda.

What are you doing here?  
Uncle doesn't ask.

Three days later,  
August digs its wheels in the mud—  
Uncle's brain is uninsured calculator.  
Uncle shuffles cards, shuffles feet.  
Uncle, dipped in a river of soot,  
digs hands into pockets  
and asks for a ride.