

scattered clouds—  
the pieces of bright sulfur  
we place by the tracks  
to mark  
where our pennies are

she rises quickly  
to answer the phone—  
the empty rocking-chair  
slows  
its rocking

trimming my nails  
on a summer afternoon,  
I think of you—  
yesterday you told me  
you just cut your hair

overcast sky—  
for the first time  
I wonder  
where my parents  
will be buried

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# Skid Marks

*Michael Dylan Welch*

freeway empty  
on Christmas morning—  
the space  
where the skid marks  
change direction

all my books collect dust  
except the one of love poems  
you gave me that day  
when the spring rains  
kept us indoors

morning mist—  
I slow down  
on the sidewalk  
to stay behind the woman  
wearing my girlfriend's perfume

a snail has left  
its delicate silver trail  
on my book of love poems  
left out on your porch  
overnight

a letter  
from a childhood friend—  
for me  
she still dots her i's  
with hearts and stars

where the rain-deepened creek  
rushes into Buntzen Lake  
I think to myself, here  
I would have to raise my voice  
were I with someone

this cold lonely night  
without you, with no chance  
of seeing you again,  
how I wish  
I could turn off the moon

Los Alamos tour guide  
discusses nuclear weapons—  
as I walk into window light  
her voice  
    grows fainter

puddles  
in the gutter . . .  
a man sleeps  
in the darkened doorway  
of the pet shelter

doing laundry  
after the argument—  
    for a moment  
she holds his best shirt  
    by the collar