

## Highway Children

Kelsey Adams

We used to run wild in knee-high grasses  
danced 'round trees like watered-down whiskey circling the drain, we'd  
come home eaten alive starving and full  
of stories we'd tell passionately, intensely  
then forget when the telling was done

Freedom tasted like sunburns and jammed fingers,  
the blood from the knee we didn't remember skinning  
till it burned that night in the bath  
hot like glittering metal, the stain  
the day's only remnants left in small rings  
'round the inside of the tub

How long and strange the days seem now  
how each freckle and scar carries tremendous weight  
the distance distorted by time and orange-slatted sunsets  
like dreams with foggy edges that  
fade upon waking  
the sky's hushed luminescence fading to grey

I hum the ghosts of songs I don't know these days  
twirl their soft fingernails around my heavy tongue  
daydream about afternoons stretching golden  
across my skin  
magic I can no longer recall waiting for me in the dust