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The kissing queens of the county fair

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The kissing queens of the county fair
David Thomas

They were the front porch, the Great Plains,
the kissing queens of the county fair.
I lay down in fields with them,
just beyond fairgrounds the whole county knows.
I held them in my sun brown arms
and kissed the sweat from their foreheads
as I pulsed between their thighs.
The notion that someone in someway failed me
is shameful; there is no failure laying down
in the straight rows of yellow wheat,
a new moon overhead.

The National Gallery
David Thomas

Sliced back my hair and took this babe to
Bourbon Street. At all hours. We explored
the old French and Spanish streets, and drank
Hurricanes until we were wearing them.
We told the streetshoe who danced on
a living room rug set down under a streetlight,
we told this streetshoe, who asked us
if we liked his pictures and then said
they weren’t for sale, “no.”
On a third floor balcony we watched the crowd
exchange places, back and forth. Bootblacks tap
danced in front of a blues bar as I smothered
my face in the girl’s naked tits. Later: 3 a.m.
The Napoleon House. Absinthe? The girl said,
“I don’t want to go. I can’t benefit by going.
I can’t benefit from sitting. Nobody else
is going. I’ve seen so many pictures.”
I drove her across the Mississippi in a rented
T-Bird to her Navy bungalow in Algiers.
Her seashell taste was still in my mouth
when I returned to the hotel. At 30
I’m able to speak without images or innuendo.
At 30 I’m able to spend the night
reading books no one reads anymore.