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## Untitled

Kristina Breiseth  
*College of DuPage*

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## Untitled

*Kristina Breiseth*

I'll tell you how the Sun rose —  
 a Ribbon at a time — *Emily Dickinson*

Seasoned face lifts to the quickening; homestead  
 branches shiver in icy sheaths. Arms constrict, steaming  
 buckets forgotten by her side. All breath suspended, the  
 strings within are drawn.

Dawn stirs: prismatic bands of coral. Crystals crack  
 in rising symphony. Melody breaks beneath memory: foreshortened  
 days in concert, long ago. But the land carried its own  
 compelling strain: father required.

The years strained her shirted shoulders: what couldn't  
 be done alone, she learned to do alone. Father lingered in age,  
 silent but present. Neighbor eyes pitied at the wake, but  
 none knew.

This land, her instrument. Once, twice faltering:  
 milk stalls emptied, then filled. Plantings, harvest continued as  
 a machine exchanged her hand for a hook, one tool for another.

The violin lies webbed in the back closet, and months  
 to wait before the cut of the first straight black furrow.

The leather harness chafes: a moment's inattention . . .  
 But calves awaited the thawing water.