**Last Light**

Amanda Leal

We weave through the Osceola Forest, golden light dusting

the spruce pines, diffused through the branches, their skirts

hemming the Tustenuggee Avenue. We carve our trail

through the town where you picked your brother up from prison,

the sun balanced like a golden dollar on the western shoulder,

and I tell you, *The sun sets everywhere else in Florida,*

*but it never feels like this.* You gaze out the window,

your lips parted, studying the curve of the avenue

as though your brother may be waiting,

along the flooded embankments,

the fog lifting off the bramble like a spirit loosening

from its bones. I want to tell you that he is everywhere,

that your love carried him even in life, as you point out

the gas station that you stopped at together, dotted now

with travelers in the distance.

I imagine when you first stepped out of the car

and appraised him, after five years, alongside the hills,

their backs arched in the distance, the dogwood trees

quivering with dew — and your brother, lean, prison tattoos

etched down his arms, black shading up to his jugular,

his round chin, identical to your own, still your brother

even with doubt that gathered like shadows around his eyes.

You saw it like the golden light that falls to the deserted road

in front of us, glittering in the rain.

I want to tell you that it existed

even if only within us, the swells of amber silt in the boughs,

the neon signs of the gas station dwindling

in the rearview mirror, the last light shattering upon the asphalt.