**Orange River**

John Landretti

I’ve aged

even in dreams.

But not you, my boundlesssoul

so alluring in your constancy,

turning toward me

with the expression

of a college love

I’d nearly forgotten,

turning in orange light

with one shoulder to the shadow

of your back room.

In my sleep

the dead come to play

with time.

They live beyond their counted words

and say fresh things meant to trouble me

back into your arms.

Old women wide as night

watch from the corners

of my sheets.

Were they to speak

it would be the ocean

finding caves, feeling sand.

How intimately

they know the earth;

on twilit smoky evenings

they comb their hair

with pine forests

and have no use for words

that merely tell

a man

what the moon

means.

But they are not you.

My body

this stone bridge

will crumble

when you

cross over

to their gray wisdom.