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Rusty Stone Silo

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Christopher Schmersahl

Rusty Stone Silo

Stone cracked silo circled by ruddy iron band—
I made it halfway up the orange rusted ladder
as a child, gripped with fear of where I'd land.

Whether it was phobia or reason dictating the matter,
my small white-knuckled hands descended from rung
to rung. I didn't look down: just hands and thunking patter.

As fear began to leave, senses returned—horse dung:
the fragrance of a yellowed pasture at the base
of the stone cracked silo to which I'd clung.

I took the fourth bar from the bottom at a gentle pace,
but when I had three more to go, I jumped on down.
There was relief there and childish, earthly grace.

Now that I've left the pasture and silo, and grown,
I don't wish for the climbing but the cracked silo of stone.