Depression

Henry Carlile

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He is pushing a black Ford
through an empty street—
a car like his father’s
that beat the flat roads like wind
in summer and brought him here.

He never forgave his father.
That was the year he left home.
Then there was talk of weather
and everyone was packing.
Windmills were stopped
all over Kansas.

He is thinking of fathers,
the ways they never forgive you,
withholding love like lust.
But they quit, they stop like pumps.
There is no way to
set them working again.

He is thinking of mothers,
how she could not know how he
half followed girls down dark streets
of his heart, how that loneliness
is passed to sons,
to the fathers of sons.

He is pushing a black Ford.
Its problem is such a heart
you cannot give it enough care.
Like a father it will quit.
And there is no end to this.