

**Places we weren't ready for.**

The swamp behind the farm house,  
that muddy trail leading from the  
backdoor pointing out to it. I was  
told not to go when dusk was near,

but those wet leaves glisten  
telling me to set one in front  
of the other.

So I did.

The rigid rain of such never felt  
so warm, its banter on  
your shoulders, its stream and  
part through your hairs,

how cold it felt when it finally  
balanced on lips. Past the

pond the aluminum canoe sits

half in with rusted holes

pouring out the rain. At its

entrance the swamp is not

in sight. We buried a dog

near here, before I can

remember and the brush

has stowed it away. Clouds

hide the light and the

time till dark has little

warning. Following the runoff

the bushes prick, a pain

it swoons on you. Thick brush

softens the rain and in the

trees above a crow reminds in its throat

how deep in the valley you stray.

Sinking further into, insects

converse at your arrival,

the deafening sound

it makes and the vial thoughts

it sinks in you. The fog that

comes across uninvited to the weeds

and brush thriving amongst the valley.

The dark falls

and how quickly,

it the lullaby of the swamp

can persuade.

## **Holding on Means More**

I was given a sheet;

its blue held

me in at night, I

was told to trade it

for something warmer

something softer, but I

didn't I didn't mind

the holes or tears

in it its too short

size rough threads

that couldn't hold

each others threads.

The unweaving of

end to end strands.

A faint idea of a

Blanket. A mirage

of comfort and

love, but

I didn't let it go

not even when

it was cold.

**By A Degree it's off.**

The dew drew clear on early cold grass

as the foliage fell to meet and wake.

From when he arrives, there is work to be done;

decking stacked, lumber loaded,

a thorough craft requires the utmost attention.

His truck bed lies open, tools for the job

in reach, the tailgate hung no longer level

and beaten from his hurrying.

He preps for the morning light's arrival

above the line, but moving in from the west,

thick clouds appear a darkened move to cover

the sky. For now he stays.

But it's in the calm, gentle and silent response

of the trees, their prickly pines no longer  
chattering dropping off their seasonal seeds,  
that the carpenter knows, running shorter  
is his time.