

Lubbock Storms

With the cotton harvested and packed
into roadside monoliths, hollowed soil cries
of hunger. Always a good listener, the sky

remembers its duty to spill and whips up
an east wind bringing clouds of sand.
Red dust makes a sunset you can touch

and fills your molars with grit.
The storm's cough grates against buildings
as pigeons tuck themselves into terracotta cubbies

in the library's walls. Courtyard grackles
fall silent for the first and last time as I stare
into the storm: heavy, gluttonous, dried-blood black.

At last, the faint sun glows like a pin-prick
through tarp, and over the dust stripping
car paint comes a grackle's single, throaty cry.

William Brown