

The Orthodontists

by Katie Berger

Timothy the moon behind him all the time
made the meaning of the syringe factory
and steel mill himself because our teachers
wouldn't do it. Midnight mythology
of orange streetlights a highway
turned to ice in an hour the radio
weatherman said nothing. Medicine and metal
the gods know the truce no more sticky cotton
candy carnivals no more pay phones
that ring all day at the mouths of malls.

The cops met for coffee at the booths inside
the supermarket until corporate ripped it out
the blank spot a spork wrapper snow
the wood panel walls the last standoff
in an Easter coloring contest the sun
fades the winners but keeps them warm.

The orthodontists moved into all the quiet
spaces. One shares its building
with a gas station the parking lot a sparkle
of motor oil. They fixed my overbite the gap
in Timothy's incisors even though our teeth
were both white as Styrofoam cups to begin with.