

# Dudley Saunders, Locust

she tells a list  
of daddy's family names  
like all the begats in the Bible  
and dark is singing in the car

and daddy aims the car to eat the road  
so silent that you start to know  
your ma don't know who those names are

cuz I am buried in the basement  
like the locusts who all sleep inside your yard  
and wake one day and try to tell you who they are

and daddy starts to cry  
and no-one says a word  
because the locust that is buried in the dirt  
comes back in seven years to hurt

lord I am one  
lord I am two  
lord I am three four  
lord I'm five hundred miles  
from that aching rocking car

while locusts rise up from the ground  
I'm hanging upside down  
in a basement underneath some town  
yelling hard

'come daddy deeper come inside  
grease me up and spread me wide  
and when I spread my teeth to cry  
it'll move the earth

with leather sinking deeper in  
I think I'll finally slip my skin  
just like this locust in the dirt  
come back this seventh year to hurt

in my body made of all the missing years  
you can see the limbs of screaming children  
move like bones beneath my skin  
and the fingers of that other wife  
who'd finally gotten out of hand  
and he can't stand

I heard him pray Jesus make my family new  
he buried me but then I grew  
a weed unwinding in his back  
a buzzing plaguing the skies to black  
yes I come back

you say, I am a tumbleweed  
some decades down the line  
to an Arizona barkeep  
with a lean untroubled mind

I'm rooted in the wind  
I'm grooved into the road  
and when I cry  
you know just why  
and there's nothing else to know'

but nestled in the sandstorm's whine

a language you can't read  
a song you cannot sing along  
an aching you don't need

like conversations through a wall  
you listen hard but all  
that you can hear is  
mmmmmmmmmmmm