

Alice Derry

## Wind Turbines

*No one knew the color of the sky. —Stephen Crane*

Joe, we didn't lie down on this ground to save it.  
When bulldozers churned these flats, and concrete pads  
sprouted towers to blot the sky, I didn't drive  
over Snoqualmie Pass in solidarity. The turbine blades  
hum so tenderly, rising above us high as coastal firs,  
their blades rhythmic machetes against the air, I'm lulled,

unafraid. Bent to the ground, how easily I erase  
what I don't want to be there. We're combing the dozers'  
unearthed bounty, agates pocketed in cooling lava  
from an earlier age. Blind to stones you've hunted  
for thirty years, I stare at the uniform clay  
while you press fragment after fragment into my hand.

In all this wind and humming, I've lost my husband  
and daughter. We went out together, but things get emotional,  
each person insisting on their own search. Now I trot  
to keep up with you. You're telling me the citizen meetings  
took months. *We agreed together on land for the turbines,*  
*but the governor overrode us—someone had her ear.*

I look up to meet your scorn. The hills interrupt me,  
still there, golden with ripening cheat grass  
in the sagebrush's gray. Higher, islands of pine  
paint the dark contrast. Huge sky—thunderheads  
rear, then stretch thin, like the flared tails of plunging horses.  
A few drops sizzle but mostly wind

flattening grass to the scalp of the rise. It smothers our talk.  
Like the girl I once was in Montana, I let it heave  
against me, stream past, so I can find my people.  
Wind pulls the tears from me. *Sure*, I say, but I'm almost  
yelling. *Someone looked out here and said,*  
*"There's nothing. Great place for turbines."*

