

Amee Nassrene Broumand

Aspenridge

Dragonflies swoop, grasshoppers thud,
seed puffs sail—
no more.

Aspenridge. By the Columbia River,
by glimpses of Hood & Helens,
the grey apartment complex crouches—
here, a field used to hiss alive
under the August moon. The din of crickets
filled the air, the hum
present before the brambles came into view—
a distant cataract conjuring a tangled world
from thunder.

I once crawled & dodged my way
into the briars to pick blackberries.
Surrounded by reeds & dried mud—
lost
in the middle of the field—
all I found
were stains & thorns—

Queen Anne's lace towered high,
blood-purple blooms biting my heart.

When the bulldozers came,
the neighborhood flooded
with bewildered wildlife—

rabbits & snakes wandered
the sunset paths.

“Don’t step on the snake,” I yawned to my sister
as we stalked above the Portland lights.

But it was too late.

