

Holy Ground

Darrell Petska

The roadside cross near Upton sports a new
red polo, insigniad over the heart.

Winter's plaid flannel is gone.

People die but do not go. He sits at table awaiting
your bread. She looks for shoes in your closet.

The clock may point to tomorrow but the heart

is yesterday: the dead are helpless. They do not
dress for the weather. They lose all interest in food.
They must be addressed directly or their attention

wanders away. The dead need a mother attentive
to laundry, and faux flowers fashioned into bouquets.
The dead need a father to shape a cross and plant it

deep into ground where spirit resides. Seasons turn.
The dead must be served. A new red shirt.
Bright flowers. A beaten path through the road ditch:

*I am Tommy Benson. My mother holds our dinner,
my father paces the floor. Always I am late
in this world, so much calling me to see.*