

It's True What They Say

by Linda Simoni-Wastila

...when I open my eyes I see what a perfect shot, the arrow stuck in the side of my neck, a fountain of blood sinking the snow like maple sap, and Dave barrels through underbrush, his breath heaves white clouds, he's lost his hat, there's a bald spot in back I'd never noticed because even though he's my little brother he's five inches taller, and he sinks to his knees, shit, shit, shit, oh shit, then fumbles in his camo for his cell and I laugh, you idiot, you fucking know you can't get a signal this side of the mountain, but he jabs at the stupid buttons anyway, and then Pa grasps my fingers, odd because he's never held my hand and he's dead ten years anyway, and he says with his eyes, it's time to go, and below spins green and white, this brilliant heat fills me, and I turn to Pa and say, hey it's true what they say on those tv shows, those people who die and come back, and when he smiles I know I'm dead and it's okay this peace falls over me, a kind of grace I feel after I mow the hayfield all sweaty and happy, or when I think of Marisa, the swell of her belly, and I wait for the tug, the one that yanks me back to Dave blubbering over me in the cold bloody snow, I wait and wait, but Pa grips me harder...

