

## The Sound of a Silk Dress / Dave Smith

The man with no name came,  
his pants thick to the knees  
with burs, and he cradled  
his face in his knuckles

and cried, if you can call  
silence crying. One of us  
spoke of dust on the sills  
of the man's house. The lid

of light lowered, flattened,  
birds darted. Across fields  
the flicker of lamps began  
but we stayed speaking softly

of the yellow bones of friends  
in the dark, their suppers,  
an empty chair. The man  
backed into his steps, turned

from us, for we were not home,  
kicked the dirt and then was  
gone. Later we tried to name  
the luck we had all had

in youth, dogs, fields, love.  
I remember him now walking  
out of our bodies to touch  
the dress with no music

in that box. I knew I would  
follow him in my own time,  
the dress was electric, his  
knuckles white in that moon.

At the door when he comes  
out of glowing stars, I say  
Lord I don't know what to do  
but go home, wash, and wait.