

Hillsboro, New Mexico

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What I remember most
comes in the color
of cumulous dust
clouding Hwy 152,
right through town.
The town, really.
Dusty as an attic
with apple orchards,
of all things,
choking through.

Our shoes kick up
musty silence beside
the church where statues
are crowned with dust.

At the edge of town,
where we drove in,
a converted red barn ripens
through heaving tree branches.
I tried to sketch this,
to steal something
to bring home.
The pencil lines
smudged and clouded.
On paper, who would discern the barn?

The sandstone ruins of the jail
the boarded-up diner
the deserted road-all
believe the cluster of locals
breakfasting at the cafe.

After muffins and coffee
we walk past
a brown Lab
sitting on the driver's side
of a red pickup
with the window rolled open.
He didn't seem to mind waiting
wasn't even aware
how comforting
this dusty town of his is.