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Country Smells

Richard D. Kahoe

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Country Smells

by Richard D. Kahoe

I gulp the heady air
dripping dew-distilled pheromones
from prairie hay in windrows.
What mortal nose resists the lure
of fresh-cured hay,
but why a sole cliché,
when sundry country scents
can spice our rural days?

I can't resist to strip a skunk brush bough
and breathe the heavy hand,
yet know full-well my nose will pucker up
like green-persimmoned lips.

When evening breezes waft
the mark of skunk itself,
I hound-dog the compass
but lock the chicken house—
the coop whence city cousins curl
in olfactory disgust,
as I savor sour ammonia
(litter, dung and kitchen scraps)
brewing slow ambrosia
for next year's garden.



Photo by Joet Kendall

The tannin concentrate so rank
in virgin hickory shoots
(no wonder goats that love them also reek);
the swamp gas smell of crawfish bisque, no less;
the dank of summer woods
invoking rotting potatoes—
a smell for every season,
for every smell a reason
hid from alien noses.

