



Marcia L. Hurlow

Country Gamble

The spin of the big wheel
starts when walking out the door,
the roulette of rolling off
the bed or staying in a minute
longer than the birds stop singing
about the risk of territory
and radiated worms, acid rain,
the cloud of the next terror
sprayed on a midnight crop.

The little gold ball drops into the slot.
Someone behind a curtain of leaves
calls "black fifty-eight," and a broom
the size of a wire-haired terrier
takes rent and tuition, taxi fare,
change for a twenty, the penny
of the loafer who tarried,
missed the lights, camera, action
of the full moon over the cornfield.

Marcia L. Hurlow teaches at Asbury University, in Kentucky. Her poetry collection *Anomie* won an Edges prize; her latest book, *Green Man in Suburbia*, appeared in 2010.