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Chris Waters

Borrowed Time

Black air, hard ground, star sky. The two midnight bells rolled over the mantle of bare swamp-maple tops. One, close by, cleanly. The other, two miles away, dimly. New century for the newcomers. I don't think like that. They talked progress. I was simply happy to fill the field. They said their first president had slept back up the hill, in the house they said had been pocked by his war's bullets. First, the stone walls marked out fields. Then, they began to set off houses, especially across the road down to the ferry,

where my roots stop. A new trolley dropped passengers at the head of the ferry road, with its ice-cream shack. The area was abuzz. Toward the bay they opened, harbinger of much else, a post office. I felt threatened. Awful buzzing.

Chris Waters has published four collections of poetry, including *Ghost Lighthouse*, and three of prose, including *Paul Claudel* and *Théâtre Noir*.