



Photograph by Yukihiro Kondo

Daniel Daly

Hill People

Then we reach the village of M.,
a bowl just past an oven of sand.

We coast around the paved square
to calls of men in dispute over cards.

Above, on the lip of the bowl,
we sway to old, broken paths
knowing the sorrow of sharp stones
and bashed pots and random bones.
Vacant dwellings cut the hillside.

We track the desert's setting sun,

the quiet. As with the idle men,
heroics bubble up, breaking from below:
players knocking back apple teas,
yanking up baggy pants, issuing farewells

as they wander home for meals at dusk.

We gaze as from the balcony of a theatre,
the soft matinee lights, dimming
on seats warm, cushions wrinkled.

We discover the car,
sit still for the rule of silence,
then step on the gas.

Daniel Daly's poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Poetry East*, *The New York Times*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *William and Mary Review*, and elsewhere. His last collection won the Tennessee Chapbook Prize.