In Search of Place (poem)

H. C. Palmer

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…for the listener…nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.
—WALACE STEVENS

You come to the prairie searching for a way
out, constrained by agendas, contracts
and a sense you’ve missed something
more than a business opportunity.
You’re ready to negotiate. Slow
the pace. You’ve nothing to lose.

Opting for a dirt road, you are astonished
by nothingness.
But you stay to see it through.

You borrow a 4 wheeler, surprised the rancher
tosses you keys—points to wheel ruts,
says, Follow the two-track to find your way.

You unload the cell phone and ear buds,
the plastic, the bills and change, the watch
and ring and ride to the crown of a hill.

You cut the engine, wade into bluestem,
listen for the something—
a word perhaps,
and consider your next move.

Kansas Flint Hills
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H.C. Palmer, an assistant poetry editor for Narrative Magazine, is a retired medical
doctor, a Vietnam War battalion surgeon, and a poet. His poetry has appeared in New
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