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Vacant House

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JEANNE DEL. BONNETTE

VACANT HOUSE

Beside the old earth-colored
adobe house haphazard on the ground
whose doors have vanished
and whose window frames are empty
wherein tumbleweeds have hidden at last
from the wind in corners

the rusty upside-down cars
lie like dark wing-folded shells
of beetles on the dry earth.

Majestic cottonwoods
rise above the corral
with no boy to throw a rope
over a low-hanging branch,
no man to lean a rake
against the great trunk,
no woman to stand in the shade,
her apron fluttering as she holds
a hand over her eyes
against the brilliance.

The echo of horses stamping
has long ago faded from the air
and now only the crows
perch high in the upper boughs
to scold the ghosts
of those who once were here
working, belonging.