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## Tishomingo County, Autumn

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**WILLIAM NOTTER**  
*Tishomingo County, Autumn*

Woodall Mountain, 806 feet  
Mississippi's tallest heap  
of gravel and red clay.  
the summit suffers litter like below,  
beer cans, candy wrappers, broken glass,  
styrene plated lunch cartons,  
charred blocks of a burned foundation.  
Off the rail of the padlocked firetower  
is sky and distance, diversion  
from rough scars in poor soil washing away.  
Darkening hills hide the broken evidence  
of hardscrabble, meanness, isolation.  
Sundown layers the horizon, pink and orange  
ozone blue salted with stars,  
a splinter of moon. The spindly head  
of a slash pine shivers in the breeze.  
Static splits the calm, a transmission  
on the radio locked inside. Paramedics' ETA  
30-year-old male, tracheal bleeding. Imagine  
blood seeping around fingers at his throat,  
land no longer softened by darkness,  
lights below twinkling differently.