

John P. Kristofco

Eddie

1963

The sun had made its turn toward fall,
had finished with the tan on his thin arms,
the golden shock of hair,
and sent his thoughts to football
for his second year,
smiling in the halls,
even to the freshmen who couldn't find their way
to lockers and the classrooms where they wondered
what the world was all about;
he seemed to know already,
that crooked smirk, the nod,
the walk that seemed to know where it was bound.

He'd be seventy today
and who knows what,
where, how far he might have gone
if only he had not looked back,
lost his step forever
and ended like that summer
in the shadow of the turning sun.

the bike on which I learned to ride

we found it in a corner of my uncle's barn,
dusted with the hay and days
forgotten like the sun
rusted next to rakes and shovels
set there when their work was done,
abandoned for some other carpet ride,

the creaking-wheeled redeemer of a soul
that needed sending to the streets
to seek its balance,
bought with bloodied knees and feet
until its liberation came
and went
at least as far as I could pedal,
as far as passing sun would let me see

John P.(Jack) Kristofco, from Highland Heights, Ohio, is professor of English and the former dean of Wayne College in Orrville. He has published over five hundred poems and thirty short stories in about two hundred different publications, including: *Folio*, *Rattle*, *The Bryant Literary Review*, *The Cimarron Review*, *Grasslimb*, *Iodine*, *Small Pond*, *The Aurorean*, *The MacGuffin*, *Sierra Nevada Review*, *Blueline*, *Sheepshead Review*, *Slant*, and *Poem*. He has published three collections of poetry, *A Box of Stones*, *Apparitions*, and *The Fire in Our Eyes* with a fourth, *The Timekeeper's Garden*, due out in the spring of 2016. He is currently working on a collection of short stories for publication next year. Jack has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize five times.