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### Winter's Last Act and On Forty Acres

### Leslie Thomas

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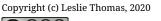
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# Winter's Last Act

## Leslie Thomas

Inside swollen soil pores, dissolve is still river destined, and sun bears down hotter as enemy. The final seasonal showing

evaporates, land glaciers surrender to lake, free-standing ice slivers have nothing left to cleave, sink unconstrained into ocean.

Cargo ships redirect their course, further north to brown earth cracks along shore lines. A curtain draws, a sea of cell phones light

for an encore that's always come before. I lie into melted remains, as water rises, cold words will vanish from dictionaries.

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# **On Forty Acres**

## Leslie Thomas

The engine followed oxen's heavy cue,

buffalo's buoyant prairie print,

the conveyor belt-grind of glacial ice. Metal tines swirling on rubber tires

crush clod and clay. Disc chiseled stalks mix with manure and NPK.

In a corner, red paint clings to heart pine, the old barn sinks into switchgrass,

goldenrod and common buckthorn. They followed the iron horse in 1868

from coast to coast, always a step behind. Ghosts ring dinner bells, fling open doors,

dream inside this falling frame, against rows and rows of corn, their voice remains.