

Sunset Hill

by [Jeff Gundy](#) in the [October 9, 2019](#) issue

The birds are still negotiating, defending their territory,
or just playing with sound and breath. From where I walk

it all sounds like beauty. Plenty of light even now in the open.
Fireflies in the trees. The labyrinth is empty, as it usually is.

K. confessed at dinner that she lost patience and walked
straight out, and I laughed because I did too, the day before.

I made all the turns but found them tedious. I put a few
stray stones back in line. Swallows looped over the grass.

I tried to grasp the pattern, but not very hard. I read
just enough of the instructions to find them annoying.

I prayed only a little, to the God I suppose I deserve.
Clouds like a great eye drift east. The bench is nearly dry.

Beyond the houselights in the valley there's a string
of nine harsh floodlights, spreading dollars like butter

on bread to citizens who need them. I am ignorant
and fluttery as the birds. I let it go and gaze at the sky

with A., who hiked up too, offered a few words, found
her own bench. The night rises to find us. I don't care

if anyone is listening, and I dream that someone is.