

Scintilla, Star

By Jameson Fitzpatrick

In the old place, there was no place
that did not see me.

Wherever I went mothers whispered
about me like a Greek chorus:

I heard that boy ... I heard that.

I was just a boy. But it was
true, what they said, that I liked
other boys, that I had stolen Sarah's,
though he was four years older
and they were very much in love.

I made him break up with her
in a Chili's parking lot
while I waited inside. I was
fourteen. How embarrassing
to have been fourteen, to have eaten
at that Chili's, often. That summer

I had no taste for anything
but him. Faintly of chlorine.

When he left for college

I had no one. Sarah's friends
stared me down at school.

I found it was better,
if I could not be no one,
to be someone. Small, but
particular. Specified, which was
an apprenticeship for special.
Cold, another word for cool.

Source: *Poetry* (December 2018)