

Windy City

By Stuart Dybek

The garments worn in flying dreams
were fashioned there—
overcoats that swooped like kites,
scarves streaming like vapor trails,
gowns ballooning into spinnakers.

In a city like that one might sail
through life led by a runaway hat.
The young scattered in whatever directions
their wild hair pointed, and gusting
into one another, fell in love.

At night, wind rippled saxophones
that hung like windchimes in pawnshop
windows, hooting through each horn
so that the streets seemed haunted
not by nighthawks, but by doves.

Pinwheels whirled from steeples
in place of crosses. At the pinnacles
of public buildings, snagged underclothes—
the only flag—flapped majestically.
And when it came time to disappear

one simply chose a thoroughfare
devoid of memories, raised a collar,
and turned his back on the wind.
I closed my eyes and stepped
into a swirl of scuttling leaves.

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