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# THREE POEMS

## BY LUCAS CHRISTIAN STOCK

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### July 4th, 1935 A Photograph

Look, my father says,  
pressing his index finger  
into the shadowed alley  
between the mercantile  
and the post office.  
A couple has hidden  
there, beneath his print.

With all other eyes  
on the grand marshal,  
gallant atop a sleek Lincoln,  
theirs are closed, their lips  
hard fastened and their hands  
searching the folds of  
one another's clothing.  
They weren't married, he says,  
not to one another.

I am just old enough  
to tingle at what is forbidden.

### Funeral Pie

Methodists pressed this flaky shell  
from flour and snow cap lard.

Poured hot into the crust,  
the coconut cream has congealed  
while they were away,  
lowering a body.

Wisps of meringue float  
over it like clouds.

Sweet end to this somber day.

### Grandfather

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Your Buick, brown as tilled ground,  
crawling up the drive. A flannel seed cap  
high on your head, a pie riding beside you,  
our Sunday dinner guest.

Your Wurlitzer forced to recall the hymns  
of your childhood, not a single note lost  
under the command of crooked fingers  
as the coffee cools and we close our eyes.

Your breath, bitter in its eighties,  
as you lean over me in the pew  
on Christmas Eve, warm with family,  
singing, "Stille nacht, heilige nacht."

Now, your cracked lips, like baby birds  
squirm in the grey nest of your beard.  
This last glance I'm determined to steal  
as mother and I watch from the door:

You rocking yourself towards death,  
cooing like a child, whimpering, yes,  
when all the while, you mean to say,  
Turn away, turn away, this is not who I am.

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**Lucas Christian Stock** lives outside of Murdock, Nebraska, and is currently pursuing his MA at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. When not writing fiction or poetry, he enjoys writing songs for his rock and roll band, *Slick Fiction*. His fiction has been anthologized in *Rural Voices: Literature from Rural Nebraska*. This is his first poetry publication.

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