

Across the Yard

It's shadow-dark  
evening at Lansing Prison

as I leave our poetry room,  
walk alone across the yard.

My slacks don't match  
their prison blues.

No guards around.  
I feel observed, uneasy,

like a dove feeding in the shadow  
of a lurking hawk.

The rough-hewn yard  
with ruts and pot holes

grants no mercy and holds  
their dreams and me in razor wire.

I show my ID, hear the gate slam  
like a judge's gavel.

by Arlin Buyert