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My Prodigal Words

Ted Badasci

My words have lost their way,
Their meanings turned opaque,
Their vitality gone, lost
In the cloister of my mind.

Time came to set them free,
Out into the open world,
To race along canyon walls
In the thick blue air of Fall,
To roam the planet,
Sit around campfires, in silence,
In dust and pine smoke,

Free to listen to the echo
Of their own being.

But as the words began
Coming home, I sensed change,
A shift in attitude. The first
To return was *Slick*.

Slick had always been lazy,
His only job to mouth opinion of
Hair products and road conditions.

But now, he shows up at my door,
On a Harley, strokes his goatee,

Tells me to go to hell, says he
Has a part-time job on a hop farm.