

## **Caramel Wrapped Blades**

Your love was caramel wrapped blades,  
a sweet veneer that cut too deep.  
The hangman left his shadow in our home,  
and you whispered, *"Don't worry, I'm here."*

You brought me music —  
the moan of the blues,  
rock and roll spun from your day —  
teaching me how to drive a stick shift,  
then teaching me how to be afraid.

At night we locked the doors,  
prayers thick in the air,  
pleading not to smell  
black licorice and cedar smoke.  
Invisible fingerprints stained my skin,  
your hands rehearsing silence at my throat.

Plates flew against stairwell walls.  
I became a shield for my brothers,  
a small cloak against your rage.  
We tiptoed over broken glass,  
counting heartbeats until the liquor  
dragged your body down.

We hauled you upstairs,  
a burden dropped at my mother's feet,  
and by morning, the pews awaited.  
The choir sang of mercy,  
and Christ forgave you.  
*Oh victory, how sweet.*