

DAVID WAGONER

The Message

Something was in the sky. It was even bigger
Than our house and painted gray, and people were running
Along our alley to see it and pointing at it,
And all our neighbors were in their yards like me,
And the firemen had all come running out of their station,
And all the teachers and children at the school
Were out as if for recess, and it was flying
Lower and lower over the hospital,
And the sick people and nurses with white hats
Were standing out on the lawn. It was so big,
I couldn't understand how it could float
And turn and come still lower and closer,
And there was a man in a cabin under it
Who was leaning out of a window, waving at me,
And my father was beside me, waving back,
And knew the man's name. He hadn't always been
Up there. He'd gone to work where my father went
Almost every morning. Suddenly something
Was falling and glittering like pieces of tinfoil,
And one was white and quicker. It fell on our grass.
I picked it up and opened the crumpled paper
From around a stone. My father could read it
And even I could read it. It said my name.