

## Road-tripping

The Middle Loup River flows  
almost flush to the land, held in place  
by an occasional chalky bank.  
Little more than a stream in spots,  
it runs south of the highway  
beyond the tracks. Every so often  
a coal train rumbles by, too many  
cars for us to count.

Soon we cross the same river again,  
the train tracks switched now  
to the highway's northern side.  
Suddenly both tracks and river  
disappear. In an impromptu game  
of hide-and-seek, we spot a stand  
of cottonwoods at river's edge  
out beyond a powdered khaki field.

Clouds stamped on a vivid sky  
throw shadows on docile hills.  
We pass through Mullen, Thedford,  
Halsey, hop-scotching the Middle Loup.  
Down the highway we are drawn  
by limestone spires to Saint Anselm's,  
Cathedral of the Sandhills. We stop  
for a moment to collect our joys.

—Janet McMillan Rives



Kim Sosin, *Impressions of the Middle Loup*