

BURN SCAR

MICHAEL P. HILL

Even in full sun,
the bare, beleaguered aspens
here beside the river
appear as silhouettes,

the effect largely owing
to charred husks of bark
slung like tattered overcoats
over their skeletal frames.

And beyond them, more still,
extending up the ridge,
a dreary, defeated regiment
on the long march home,

the odd slash of white
like that of bandaged wounds,
some so deeply felt
they may never heal entirely.

MICHAEL P. HILL is the author of the chapbooks *Not Just Passing Through* (Main Street Rag Publishing, 2022) and *Junk Drawer* (Kelsay Books, 2021). His poems have also appeared in *Midwestern Gothic*, *Spillway*, *Briar Cliff Review*, *Soundings East* and *Gray's Sporting Journal*, among others. He lives in Northern Colorado with his family.