

Tom Montag

There Were Hills

from The Woman In an Imaginary Painting

There were hills
and she was a girl.

Water ran
in a small creek,

as small creeks do.
The sun loved

the grasses and
the wind loved

the trees. She was
that girl, watching

birds in the dust,
listening to them

sing. It was
another time,

the other side
of this place

we inhabit.
She would recall

everything
if she could, but

the paint has
dried. It has

been set so long
there is no story

left to tell.

Tom Montag's books of poetry include: *Making Hay & Other Poems*; *Middle Ground*; *The Big Book of Ben Zen*; *In This Place: Selected Poems 1982-2013*; *This Wrecked World*; *The Miles No One Wants*; *Imagination's Place*; *Love Poems*; and *Seventy at Seventy*. His poem 'Lecturing My Daughter in Her First Fall Rain' has been permanently incorporated into the design of the Milwaukee Convention Center. He blogs at The

Middlewesterner. With David Graham he recently co-edited *Local News: Poetry About Small Towns*.