

JUSTIN HAMM

From the Poet

Friend, I have only stopped in
to briefly describe for you

the bushbrowed old German,
and the way he wrestled

that ancient squeezebox
into a slow swerving polka—

music for the barefoot widow
to dance away the grief

she'd long hidden behind
eyes half-painted like two

deserted roadside attractions.
And maybe to add a line or two

about the shadow that seemed
to rise from her skin like vapor,

leaving behind some other
more hopeful being entirely.

I might even say something
of the after-embrace—strangers,

before and after, holding on
hard to ward off the end of times.

But then—back to my own house.
Someone I've hurt is waiting.



ABOUT JUSTIN HAMM

Justin Hamm is the author of two chapbooks: *Illinois, My Apologies* (RockSaw Press 2011) and *The Everyday Parade/Alone with Turntable, Old Records* (Crisis Chronicles Press 2013). His work has appeared in *Nimrod*, *Cream City Review*, *Sugar House Review*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, and *Big Muddy*. He is the founding editor of *the museum of americana* and can be visited online at noiseforitsownsake.blogspot.com.

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herontree.com/hamm1

