

## Bank Shot

Greg McBride

I asked about the old days, when they  
were my age—my mother scrambling eggs,  
Dad and I at the table. He aimed a glance  
sidelong at her, then took a shot toward me:

*We've been very lucky, Son.*

He must have meant their gamboling, teenage  
marriage after weeks of jitterbug jokes  
and getting-to-know-you's in the Abilene  
Lady Luck pool hall in 1941.

Her silence like the hush of a tournament  
match, the cue's tip skittish at the ball,  
probing for angle and spin, velocity,  
the all-important leave and follow-on.

By now—both gone so long, both unlucky—  
I understand his game, how words can  
travel in disguise, their spin covert,  
as on that morning when his mumbled plea

caromed off me—sharply, as off  
a felted cushion—and spun toward her,  
determined at the stove:

*Come on, Honey, let's play.  
Let's keep the run alive.*