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## **Desert Sighting**

A shirtless boy picks his way through  
thorns of prickly pear, saguaro cacti.  
Avoiding hurt, he elongates his frame,  
thins by breathing in, twists his torso.

My sighting of him is brief—  
blue shorts, black hair, a dune of back—  
and, then, he disappears. How little  
I have seen of this lean, muscled land

where I have recently arrived.  
Already, I know a person doesn't walk  
into the Sonoran, mid-day, exposed,  
unless he is a visitor, too. My guess,

as I'm learning the terms of Arizona,  
is that he has found a hollowed wash,  
abode smooth—his skin, the bed—  
and follows the sculpted route.

I understand his desire for a cool gully,  
relief from the land's ready hazards.  
That boy, should he look closely  
along his way, will pass a sight I saw:

an ancient *metate*, a granite slab, mica aglint,  
where Indian women ground mesquite pods  
with such diligence they carved  
a flawless surface depression.

Those of us who know of it, off the trail,  
had knelt and placed our palms within—  
the stone's opposing force  
everyone's touch back.

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### **Painterly Effect**

In a dark, close barn  
where Wyeth had painted—  
and painted—I heard  
clomps of iron wood;  
and from a stall  
the white head  
of a horse shot out,  
bright as a swinging lantern.  
I'd been the day's  
only guest, the docent said.  
The animal named Devane  
was lonely for company.  
I petted the planes  
of his taut jaws,  
then dipped my hands  
into the spring-fed trough  
Wyeth had decided  
to exaggerate in scale,  
though not in import.