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## Pregnant Girls in High School

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*Tom Chandler*

## Pregnant Girls in High School

Would lean against their lockers  
with their bellies pressed into  
the anguish of algebra while

I would try to look indifferent  
passing by their lives on my way  
to fail another true false test.

Their boyfriends were too tough  
for football or laughter and lounged  
in the hallways like sullen sultans,

hands carved into permanent fists,  
their careless faces unfolding as men  
who would soon leave forever to work

fitting pipe on their backs in the dirt  
or riding jackhammers inside clouds  
of noise while the fast-faded mothers

of the babies they'd fathered  
smoked down to the filter and  
ironed the sheets in the shadows.