

My hometown carved out a golf course from 2,000-year-old
Native American ceremonial earthworks
By Dawn Dupler

but I don't know this tonight as my high school boyfriend runs with me atop his shoulders up a perfectly manicured, waist-high mound. Artifacts still interred below us. Maybe a grizzly bear headdress or a blue heron effigy pipe. Earthworks all around us, the golf course's natural obstacles. Beneath them, skinning knives that once separated hide from its meat. Around our feet, where golfers tee off, pieces of wood splintered into toothpicks. Ten times our combined weight doesn't come close to the pressure pushing back up.



If they had taught us how these 100 acres of still-standing earthworks formed an octagon. How it aligned with the lunar cycle. Flown us overhead, so we could have seen its geometry from above. If our parents had told us these grounds are still sacred to someone. If only I knew our grandfathers had been driving golf balls over cathedrals all these years, maybe I would recognize all this as trespass.



Trespass: as in violate. Before golfers, soldiers camped here. Marched between mounds, prepared for yet another civil war. Fired canons mounted atop ceremonial earth. All this while copper bear claws and mica birds and frogs rested, remain resting, beneath. Trespass: as in step foot on another's property. How twenty years ago they arrested a Cherokee elder for praying where her ancestors had prayed, holding up play on the back nine. How a century before indigenous people had been driven out like chattel. Now everything so perfectly green, as if a town needs something pretty to distract from the true. Trespass: as in a long buried sin.



Eventually, we all show our gods what we're really made of. Armaments and earth. Grit and stardust. Astronomers and precise builders. Movers of soil, basket by basket. Unlike the savage stories our text-books taught us. All those shoebox dioramas of pioneers

taming the wildness from the land. Lining up one heaven to fit another's sky. Still, they whisper to their gods: *this is where we look for you*. Despite the centuries' weight, the trespass: *this is where we still find you*.