

## Mosquito Truck

*Come in now, come in*, my father commanded, hearing its slow progress up Cottonwood Drive, even if this were one of those fine evenings that seemed to last into tomorrow, one of those fine evenings every kid on the street was out on a banana seat bike, or dribbling a basketball, or still wet in a swimsuit and running in the yard. And the aluminum sashes tight in their frames announced we were slamming our windows to the entire neighborhood, which made it worse somehow, to be publicly stuck inside while the rumbling approached like an army of liberators, then the truck itself with its glorious spray and billowing sweet-smelling chemical clouds, its pea soup fog. All the kids but us rode and ran along behind, those flashy stingrays with their tasseled handlebars, little towheads and big brothers who whooped and hollered, breathing deep and willing themselves not to cough, who pulled wheelies and pinwheels as if they were rodeo stars in a parade. Which this was. The driver, as benevolent as if he were dispensing ice cream, waved and grinned into his side view mirror. Hello, hello! What summer entertainment! *Damned kids*, my father would say, shaking his head and probably right.