

Secondhand Sagas In a Small Town Kentucky Newspaper

by Tessa Nelson-Humphries

I riffle the used clothing ads . . .
 Lace wedding dress, never worn, size twelve.
Why wasn't it worn? I long to delve.
 Fight? Mine accident? Better beau?
 Kentucky is hardscrabble coal country.

Wait! Here's another . . .
 Size three, in pink.
 Small, dainty girl. Blonde, wide-eyed, I think,
 Prom waltzing in the arms of a miner's big-boned son.
 Kentucky is hardscrabble coal country.

Finally, a Juno-esque offer . . .
 Size twenty-four, burgundy satin.
 Big, bosomy mountain Valkyrie surely put that in.
 Burgundy is sensible, slimming.
 Kentucky is hardscrabble coal country.