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Sabrina in the Water

Each June, she plunged into the river with other children and sea nettles, the slimmest extra layer of flesh no shield, rather more surface area to sting. Accustomed, as a fish, to murk, she reached and pulled away from shore and school and father drinking in a sweaty cottage at midday. Burbles and bubbles cooled ears sore from so much hearing, and every breath tasted green on her lips in these long days, short weeks, briefly buoyant.

Slow Fade

The first to fade is nouns—and then the hair, once thick with lustrous, burnished copper curls that burned themselves out, leaving patches bare amid unruly, brittle, ashen swirls.

Like paint too long exposed to glaring sun, the skin once rosy (lively, vibrant hue) surrenders to translucence, every one of subterranean blood vessels in view.

Soft, puffy dreams of what could be slide past until ambition crawls away to hide, for each tomorrow claims more than the last, relentlessly—incessant, rising tide.

To dimming eyes, sheer will kindles faint spark of hope. Light yet restrains the dark.

Gumption

Gumption is a red-cheeked girl grinning, “What’s the fun of winter without a face full of snow?”

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Memory, what is it?

Memory, what is it?

The one who transplanted herself so they would not  
mislaid the memory of her, who  
could not convince her brain to pass the name  
of her home state along to her tongue,  
asserts, "The little one won't remember the beach.  
Too young."

And of what value is Memory?

If "Iowa" leaps to the lips, or  
wind ruffling hair years hence stirs  
just a notion:  
warm and crunchy grains sinking underfoot,  
thunder that tasted like salt...

A Dusting

May we all march forth expecting joy like  
a child bundled in slick bib overalls,  
wrapped in waterproof coat, topped with  
bobbing pom-pom hat, boots tromping out the door  
to greet  
half an inch of  
snow that transforms the wide, wide world  
as far as anyone can see.