

April

What is the difference between bone and pearl
when both are returned to the beloved in the end—
stacked neatly in memory, next to the chipping vinyl,
and little pink packets of Sweet'n Low.

Vaulted next to a worn Snoopy doll,
stuffing falling out his ears,
and a varnish speckled sweatshirt,
and a jewelry box filled with teeth.

In the depths of boxes, and earth,
where distance from the daily
allows you to forget, to numb, to dull.
To fixate on the mundane.

To pass through the hall filled with
crushed leaves, scattered like ashes,
stained soles, tracking in blood
of chokecherries.

Sweet Nothing

Sugar burned at the back of my throat—
the way a thought sometimes can,
and you couldn't remember my name.

I walked home to
see the way palm trees burst
like fireworks from their coconut centers;

lighting up the dark sky to haunt
a December, looking more like April
wrung dry over the kitchen sink.

Winchester, MA

You close your eyes and you are back—
a boy, amidst the leaves in fall
burning copper and goldenrod.
The bodies of creaking trees
yipping like zebras
in the sharp, smoky air—

Now you stand, in ghosts' clothes
secrets lost in the folds of your cheeks
spotted, falling in on itself,
like your scourged memory. Going, gone:
All that is left
is the sweet decay of geraniums,
and a snatch of upstairs cello.