

Dissolving Days

I remembered the day I awoke
to bacon crackling and chocolate chip pancakes
How I circled each forkful in furrows
of steaming maple syrup
until the gold plate sparkled.

I splashed cold water on my cheeks,
watched the last trickle vanish in the drain.
I carved "I love you" on a foamy
bar of white soap before I left.

I grasped a smooth stone on the edge
of the driveway hidden beneath purple pansies.
I remembered how the yellow roses
reflected the sunlight.

My sticky sleeve reminded me
of slurping orange popsicles
dripping down my arm, leaving
empty tongue depressors.

We built log cabins out of them
when play was king
and underneath our capes
we hid swords.

The memories swirled
into a dazzling display
then suddenly disappeared.

If only I could have saved them
from the drainage ditch that day
When I ran my car off the road
for the last time.

Lost Change

I love to look for coins dropped
in parking lots, on sidewalks.
At dusk against black asphalt dimes
gleam as the sun slips away.

Pennies found face down
bring bad luck so I've heard.
I flip them face up first
to head off disaster.

Each stray nickel begs to be rescued from gutters.
In the street, I find pennies flattened,
their images sanded down, surfaces
pitted by gravel yet surviving.

I remember my mother selling
wire hangers to the dry cleaners
and returning glass soda bottles
to grocers for loose change.

Every cent counted.
Even pennies mattered
when bread and milk consumed
money she could not keep.

I feared rising gas prices
and the end of each month.
Mother's search for money
became my secret dread.

I longed for my own pennies
the size of silver dollars,
copper disks shiny and coveted
treasure for purchasing penny candy.

Red and yellow coated chocolate drops
lined inside tiny cellophane wrappers,
pink bubble gum positioned eye level
for chubby small hands to grasp.

Discovered coins buy bitter-sweet memories
when they roll across my path.

The value of a lost childhood found
in a cent.

Silent House, Secret Home

My childhood house reached out to me
the first time I visited it alone.
Warm brown wood, firm red brick embrace,
uplifted its beams, flung open the door.

Impenetrable walls kept others away.
Sinews relaxed, its foundation sighed.
Silence sound-cushioned the dark, cool den
from heated remnants of hate-filled speech.

My father's absence too brief, too rare
the house unleashed imprisoned joy.
I ran room to room, deeply inhaling
fresh air rushed in, fragrant and free.

The house unmasked its secret that day
the grandfather clock chimed in.
We shared a new unspoken bond.
An empty house welcomed me home.

Fade to Green

They died swiftly cut down
their trunks and limbs amputated
by axes of lumberjacks.

Foxes' dens and owls' nests displaced,
piles of detached leaves fell
into a funeral pyre.

Wooden houses soon trespassed
the barren landscape, unnatural
vestiges of live oaks and evergreens.

Closed doors shut out guests
who intruded uninvited
yet no building could keep out death.

In silence walls crumbled, collapsed
ceilings gave way to yellowed leaves,
a garage door guarded emptiness.

Broken boards lined cold concrete
Winter blasted the façade
Sunlight faded the peeling paint.

A shroud of decay encased the place
until one day a neighboring tree
penetrated the broken space.

It stretched a canopy across
the absent roof, strong branches
of primordial life.

Blue skies caress the forest again
as tender green leaves
whisper in the wind.