

Love in the Air

I Don't Know What to Say

*I've dreamed about you countless
sleepless nights. Or maybe, I've
loved you since the day you walked
through the church doors, eight
years ago. Perhaps, I put on this dress
because I thought maybe your breath
would short at the sight of me. None
of these work, so instead I say, yes,
I'm happy to be home, and then I fall
silent and wait but you don't say
what I wish you would. I am a fool,
I'll say then, a fool because I let
myself think that you cared, thought, dreamed
about me the way I care, think, dream
about you. I wrote songs about you, poems
about you and here you are, in the flesh,
as disinterested as ever. So I smile
and turn my back, laugh, talk, live and wish
you couldn't take your eyes off of me.*

whisper-talk

my mouth screws up at first taste of the bitter
liquid that scorches my tongue and grates
its way down my throat. i blink against
the pale sun light that lances through the windshield
and strikes my eyelids. his striped Goodwill sweatshirt
drapes the passenger seat next to a crumpled paper

airplane, graffittied with green marker. jacob
is his son's name, and as he creased the pages
and folded them into the flying device,
he leaned across the table and whispered, "someday
my daddy wants to marry you." i ran almost
without a backwards glance. today i wonder

what this car would look like if i had stayed—
would there be another car seat, for little
lydia or carl? would I be driving to preschool
instead of the airport? would the gun he pressed
to his temple have stayed, safely, in the drawer?

Pavlova

She challenges me to a race
across the glass surface of the lake,
Ice Queen white under winter's sun,

and we slide, easily, feet stroking
the ice. I see her eyes alight
with a joy I've been seeking

since I took my first floundering
breath of air in mother's pink
arms. Her skates frost the lake,

arms above, twirling like Anna
Pavlova, laughter tinkling like champagne
glasses at a ball. This tiny

Wilmore has never looked so much
like a celestial palace as when I look
into her deep brown eyes, and drown.

Consciousness

You take over my consciousness
pushing aside concerns about the paper
I don't know how to write or the school
I can't afford. My dreams dance with visions
of your face, with symphonies
of your words ricocheting across the walls
of my mind. My fingers tremble around

the coffee cup whose contents shiver
in the unsteadiness of my grip when you
are around. You say you love me
like a sister and you appreciate
me and that is good. But you fill
every thought and moment and that
is all I can think, all I can imagine.

You Left

You left without saying good-bye
blew in with barely a smile
and out before I could blink. You
talked to everyone—and their mothers—
in an ever widening circle around
me, sitting, waiting. Last night
I dreamed you kissed me under
the stars and today I laughed
because you left with no good-bye.