

Syringa vulgaris*Only For The Sake Of Answering Myself*

Now summer is
veiled in vast
ochre fields and skies;

nothing like air before rain
or smile from someone
who has forgotten you.

Now is vague and immense
heavy as hunger;
no more screened porches
and lobster by the Atlantic,

never again the mist of the Pacific.

It is doing laundry when you know
your grandfather is going to die;
much like a colder wind

than you imagined
and forgetting what your mother looks like
even though she is still alive.
It is a house

that smells the same as it did
the day you arrived;

Is This Allowed?

1.
The House pulses behind me,
haunting,
 haunted,

a weighty presence:
I can sense
my mother is there
and that darkness reaches all
the way down the road
to where I turn
the other way.

I had forgotten how many fields
are in this town so hard
to drive through again;
tunnels of trees shade
this town littered
with so many
graveyards.

2.
My sister and I play dress-up
at our grandfather's house,
looking in every closet and drawer
for treasures and
we run under trees
in a garden-turned-jungle
where nothing can go wrong.

3.
I almost drove past The House
just to see if I could, but

 that was not the way
 home.

And Not As Shame

I want to wear your memory
as a red overcoat;

the one you tried to throw away
but I kept it anyway
even though it's too big.

(I shrunk it in the wash
but you hate it when
I do that.)

Eliot

My mother told me
many times that
 "April is the cruelest month."

She was right for the wrong
reasons.

(Sometimes we could only talk
to each other in poetry.)

 She told me to vacuum my own wasps;
I do not hate her for that,
but only for thinking
I would become
less afraid.