

Azaria Brown

As I Wait For a Miracle

for Brandon

We sit beneath the stairwell
 or coffee table
 or blanket with holes and spaghetti sauce stains
My brothers and my sister
We cluster together and squeeze hands
 and think back two minutes ago
 when everything was just fine
Before a temper triggering
 phrase, word, syllable
Sent the giant stomping through the small village
 terrorizing tiny neighbors; ripping lives apart
His footsteps shake the earth and sent cracks
 shattering through shag carpeting
 blood red
 the air smells like aging metal
Somehow my hands aren't big enough
 to block the scream
 the crunch
 the cry
We speak in silence and hesitant glances
 because anyone can be next
I tell my brothers and my sister not to worry
 hope will come
 and he will wear all white
He will put his heart on his sleeve
 and his anger on his mouth
He will take us shopping
 our clothes will no longer be two sizes too small
No longer will asking to be fed
 feel like breaking the law
No longer will our mother wake up
 with a ring around her throat
 and a shade over her eye.
But for now
 we wait.

Max Doten

Mine

My fear is the caffeine addiction, lurking behind the life it sustains.
My inspiration is a flower, blooming only once in a year.
My rage is a firework, exploding brilliantly and fading to nothing.

My trust is a cell in our heart, never regrowing and barely mending.
My regret is a door, locking just behind.
My confidence is a prop mountain, made convincingly of hollow plastic.

My love is a river, held up by a dam.
My devotion is the water, carving rock with unceasing flow.
My hope is a bucket down a well everyone thinks is dry.

Eva Pappas

Syrah

Syrah comes from Southern France
to visit at my bedside

she calls out to me, “won’t you dance?”
and shakes me til I rise

Syrah smiles maroon and bright
and bumps into my dresser

to the rhythm of the night
we move and I caress her

Syrah pulls me back to bed
and with the dawn I wake

she’s left me with a heavy head
still, until night I wait.