

Libby's Summer

The red of a diagram is
the perfect branching, like a tree bare
of leaves that twists up into the sky.
The day's bright orb fades as branches
reach. Each individual bald brown twig
stretching to touch the sky as calm

blue turns into dark, wet, cold nights. Upset
not from the cloud's blush, but from the way diamond
stars hide behind smoke. The way reaching
branches never touch. The way Yai-yai's eyes close
when 'artery' or 'clogged' or 'surgery' is said.
Her son watches these words ravage

a barren room: Yai-yai's moist eyes open
pleading, *lie to me*, as the doctor drones.
He smiles as he stops, waiting for dad to speak.
I grip grandma's dry hands; hoping as pale
olive skin sags to a grin to laugh with her.
In a year her backyard will cape
us in the shade of her aged persimmon tree.

The Dimitriou House

"The music,
arriving out of hidden ground

and endlessly beginning, is now the flower,
now the fruit, now our cup and cheer
under branches more ancient than our grandmother's hair."

-Li Young Lee

Disheveled hair kisses my grandmother's ears.
Her hair has gray roots with purple
meant-to-be-black dye.
The kind of hair born from
overbearing issues:
 of hospital visits,
 forgetting the day before,
 of too much medicine.

She now sits on her old wooden chair,
on her porch, smiling at the sun and my
car inching up her driveway.
She looks at her green front lawn,
at its border of hydrangeas and
yellow and pink roses.

This is her legacy, the green
etched into the channels
of her son's thumbprint.

She stands leaning on her cane
beneath her right hand. Her smile
grows when my car stops and our doors open.
My sister's long brown hair dances
as we step into a caressing wind.

Eclectic Dirt

Hail slaps
 down on concrete
 in shovel-fulls,

shovel fulls
 of murky water,
 rain mixed with dirt;
not the dirt
 a rose grows up in,
 the eclectic dirt
 of a day dedicated

to twilight.
To ripples in cocoa-butter
water bouncing with rain
as horses run over
tight gravel.
Water rebounds
as grains of dirt jump up—

the dregs of day,
 like an empty tea cup,
 leaves loose and muddy,
like a
swamp. I wear my red
 bikini and slide
 my fair-skinned toe
into the brown-grey

 water. Sinking into slimy, inviting mud.
 Trees placed methodically
in a half-moon surrounding the swamp.
 I feel a creature sweep past
 my foot in the water--

the dregs of a day
 alone,
 in the swamp under
a cold shade.