

Pearl

Your mother begged me to bring you
home. Her face was a pale dirty
moon as I mentioned the peace
you've found in a temple where silence
woke the pine that stretched over the night.
We sat in her salon. Pots of bald bonsai
fingered into the space. Slices of her last
sentence crumbled in the air. Her cluttered
mind was flying on wings. It murdered
my silence. Suddenly her gaze became
yours before it slashed through my back.
She insisted that you practiced denial.
I gagged my tongue, dipped a lemon tart
into cold tea. A lump of sugar sank
to the bottom of my cup. It was my heart.

["Pearl" first appeared in *Tiger's Eye*, Fall/Winter 2009].