

Hangin'g Laundry Outdoors

by Kelsey Allagood

Two forgotten breakfasts, an unrecalled shower,
several offhanded trips to the hardware store later,
and it has all been turned over,
re-ironed, sent to the tumble dryer and hung
in the yard, where a moment's freshness blows.

When it rains, only laundry or temper, corner-snagging
lucidity, drag us creaking from immobility;
I wonder when he won't recognize
those linear iridescent spirits that wave,
and he rushes from the porch into a storm to tear them down,
finally face-to-face with hauntings I have never heard.

In an oval frame, a photo of his own father,
a man in coveralls I never knew, and he me,
even when alive. He died watched by ghosts,
lost in his own memory. Almost more frightening than this
is this induced before senility.
Heredity might have gone better undiscovered.

His old child's synapses remain sparked.
On days when the sun is warm and the wind still,
I pretend I know the only grandfather
who has ever receded and returned,
a white shirt he has just pinned flapping on the line.

Kelsey is from Westminster, SC where she attended West Oak High School.