

## Daughter, in April

Today, rain washing at the surface  
of things, you come in after your two-mile run  
with the blonde grace  
of your solitude.

Memories stay like separate  
rooms—no hallway to connect where you are now:  
A fisher's vest you wore at five, hoarding old keys,  
acorns, and bottlecaps.

The path your running made on the backyard slope.  
The times you walked and walked  
going nowhere  
when weather turned you indoors.

How you regretted school,  
and your sleep's fidelity turned  
to something else,  
your jaw squared itself  
into what came: Years of A's,  
of nightmares. Working out in any sport.  
Coaches begging at the door.  
You turning them away  
for time alone.

Sometimes I think you have grown  
like bamboo—something secret to keep you  
straight, becoming polished without reaching out.  
So many times it has felt like this . . .  
little I can do except  
iron these tall-sized shirts with the pockets  
you love, add vegetables to soup,  
study your vigilant silence.

—Dixie Partridge