

Imprints

Eucalyptus and date palms grow in my mind.
Like gulls that followed my lunch to school,
The smell of the sea from my nursery
Followed me to Alabama. It mingled
With magnolia; it mocked the red clay.
And now the Rockies haunt me, like the negative
You see after staring at one color.

My parakeet is bonded to me,
But talks endlessly to his mirror.
How does he know his own?
Like his neon-colored feathers
And the hollow in his bone,
It grows.

After you left, I could still see you
There, where you lay beside me,
Imprinted on your pillow,
A shadow behind my eyes.

—Karen Todd