

Two Poems

Alison Prine

Memoir

pink sponge curlers with closures
that snapped into place

the thud of a green tennis ball
struck against the back of the house

milk in an aluminum cup, the red one
my favorite

smoke from Salems drifting out
across a tar-mended street

five sisters, one brother
a house of brick and sighs

until the day people arrived
bringing all those hams and casseroles

go ask the neighbors for the story of my life
a narrative easily structured around emergencies

the sentences are written
inside the wall of my chest

The Subject Is Not Loss

but an afternoon with you
on an empty beach years after.

Not the ones who are gone
but the ways we see them in each other.

I read a letter from my father to my mother
when he was in the Navy 65 years ago—

you said I talk like that
when I unbutton your shirt.

On the shore your face strained
by laughter is washed in sun.

The recognition in our gaze
is cumulative.

Every morning I wake
to watch dawn unfold over the harbor.

At night I crave to go back into
the conversation our bodies have in sleep.

