

Laundromat

Sock to sock, the clothes
match up and collapse
in my hands in neat stacks.
Static fires blue
between the sheets.
It's not a metaphor;
it's a switch of electrons.

The wind is up, it tangles
the honey locust,
tassels the browned azalea blooms.
I smooth each pillowcase
into a regular pane of blue.
Sometimes a man
comes in here to sleep.

Someone calls the police,
but the man's gone
before they get here.
And what's the point?
He doesn't take our keys
or wallets, doesn't steal
a clean shirt from the dryers,

doesn't even speak, just curls
beside the warm machines
and shuts his eyes,
lulled by the regular hum

beneath the thunder. By morning,
when the dark-eyed junco
trills in the honey locust,

he'll be gone.

Twice I've ended up
with socks that aren't mine.

I leave them here.

The weft of wind
beats hard
in the warp of trees.