

# That Day



Poems for Matthew

Hannah Mahoney

obsidian char  
at the split  
of the lightning-struck oak —  
my father's  
crumpled sob

Credits for previously published material:

at my brother's wake: LYNX 26.2  
from a dusty box: Notes from the Gean 3.1;  
Take Five: Best Contemporary Tanka, vol. 4  
the tilted half-moon: A Hundred Gourds, 1.4

## THAT DAY

That morning,  
I thought, I should call him.

That morning,  
I pushed my daughter  
on the swings.

That morning,  
the phone rang.

That morning,  
my brother packed a sandwich,  
ham and cheese,  
and tucked it in his briefcase.

That morning,  
I held his photo in my hand.

That morning,  
he headed out the door.  
Then he turned back  
and took out a chair.

That morning,  
That day.

at my brother's wake  
his long, elegant fingers  
bitten-down nails

rescued  
from the hurtling train  
the poet Santoka  
walked deep into green mountains . . .  
your pastels, paints, unformed clay

from a dusty box  
his journal describes a day  
—  
I'd forgotten  
in the deep Arctic night  
icebergs calve and drift

the tree's shadow  
on the white clapboard wall  
and the tree itself . . .  
your drawings, notes, old photos  
and the stories we tell  
the tilted half-moon  
bright-edged earlier  
is smudged now with haze  
step by step I walk  
into a future without you

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Cover Art: Family photo, Honolulu, 1967

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