

Greenville Memorial

Hanna Davis

I did not know her
 until she was dead.
 I collect pieces from warm asphalt:
 The skin of her knee.
 Tender, honeyed fingers, comfortable
 between familiar bones and a tongue.
 Baby teeth scattered through the trash
 Like ashes at sea;
 I can feel every piece of baked bone
 Sear into my cheek at a fine point.
 Dewed with the marrow of life,
 Stinking of death and sweat.
 All the world a pair of dirt-cruste'd feet:
 Size 13 youth.
 I wish I had memorized the soft-fleshed joints
 before the ache grew in.
 This is a death, too.
 This is a goodbye.