

# Elephant Keys

My auntie left a grand piano.  
Ivory-keyed, it claimed  
our Midtown living room.

Never tuned,  
with true elephant keys--  
a sound like a trumpet:

My auntie's unplayable piano.  
Mom kept it spotless,  
dusted with care.

She stored books in its bench,  
laid lace across its cover--  
useless and loved.

I offered a polish,  
an overdue tuning.  
But Mom went white,

whiter than ivory.  
Ivory, she said, is precious.  
A tuner would steal the keys,

replace them with plastic.

Good, I said.

Why keep an elephant in a living room?