

## The Biochemist & the Filmmaker

*Allie Vugrincic*

I asked you, the week after we moved here,  
If it would ever look so new and beautiful again.  
“No” was your simple reply, and I wanted  
You to be lying, but I knew it was the truth.

Four years separates us from that day –  
The tree in the courtyard has been gone for two,  
And my father has been dead for one.  
We have since learned to laugh at these absurdities.

We never attended any of the funerals,  
But we can list the names like periodic elements,  
Those most basic substances into which they dissolved.  
Sometimes we count ourselves among the dead.

And yet, we stand in the first snow eating ice cream  
You tutor chemistry, and I swap lenses on cameras  
To open the aperture further, and shed some light  
On stories that only make sense in the dark.

We add to our list the broken people –  
Especially the ones who pick at our brains,  
Or we find asleep on our couch in the afternoon.  
They are alive, but they don’t always believe it.

Like the October vegetables sitting on our mantel,  
Beneath the silk poinsettias and empty bottles,  
Our time here has all but expired – and we rot  
From the inside out, or rather we bloom

With the flowers of May. Soon you will  
Not be by my side to speak your reason,  
But the story we shared will carry your echo  
Over a new and beautiful horizon.