

Happiness Came Too Early

by Leigh Anne Hornfeldt

—line from a third grader's poem

The phrase lilts from her mouth
and flutters to the desk like confetti.
I want to collect it into my hands
but my hands are full: papers, prescriptions,
a checkbook never balanced.
I'll be back for that I think
but already the magnolia is weeping
its blossoms into the courtyard
on North Hamilton. The wrought iron
gate vacillates. Already the umber.
I've forgotten what it was I was
coming back for.