

Small Things

How the moon affects
water in a bathroom sink
How a dragonfly lights on the stem
of a broken wineglass.

How, in February 1988, my sister was born
blue-faced, cord around her neck. The size
of the casket lowered into frozen earth
only days later. The Big Bang

before it scattered. Before the solar system,
before planets, the dust of elements formed comets,
so small the gravity of the Universe
was enough to pull them off
their ellipses. On Saturdays,

I would walk the short path of the graveyard,
beetles eating the leaves of dead roses.
I don't remember what she looked like,
or if I ever saw her. No one took pictures.

Protons. Protozoa. The zygote
carrying one too many chromosomes.
The chromosome. Me, in a woman's bed
in Pittsburgh, as she makes summer plans
with me in mind. We won't know each other then.

How rainwater will widen a crack in stone.
How an atom, dividing, can level a city.

How small bones hollow and decay.

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