

Stargazer

by Aron Ryan

You are
fireflies flickering,
constellations
caught in my clasped hands
till your light slips
past.

You are
stars stranded
in the gaps
between my fingers,
moon smudged
beneath my thumb.

You are
my favorite
constellation:
silver ladle
pouring starlight
into my cupped
hands. You are a bear
chased by three
hunters. You are a coffin
trailed by three
mourners.

You are
fire fluttering
in my fist,
letting you burn
to the wick,
letting the wax
weep red
over your wilted
flowerbed.

You are
lost – the way embers
lose their glow,
smoldering slowly,
light lingering
long after your warmth's
long gone.

I am
the darkness
when you
extinguished,
leaving
the scent of smoke
in my coat, in my throat, in my
head. You left memories
of birthday candles melting
pink, green, yellow, blue
all your beauty snuffed in one
huff. Time and time again,
I breathe in what's left of your wish.
What's left of your wish?

You were
wishing stars
caged in
jelly jars. They once held
something sweet.

I tried twisting that lid tight,
but you weren't mine to keep.