Box in a Closet

Faith Shearin

I open a box
in a closet and here I find us,
stuck in scenes long forgotten: my uncle
disappearing down an oak alley
in a horse-drawn carriage,
my grandmother dressed for a garden party,
gloves to her elbows, posed in a stiff
southern parlor, 1953. Here is the trip
to Disney World where we drank from
plastic oranges, held balloons
with ears; oh, we grow younger
on beaches, until we are babies, naked
on blankets, and my grandfather
rises from the grave to sit
in a wood-paneled living room,
on a plaid couch, in a fedora.
I find my cousins beneath cypress trees,
in a river at sunset, and my sister,
age eight, dressed as a mosquito,
on her way to a costume party.
The van that floated away
in a hurricane reassembles itself in our driveway and my father’s dog, ten years dead, rides over the lagoon

where she will someday drown, in a canoe: October falling, my father’s hair black, his paddle still in his hands.