

[redacted]

for him and his family

He is eleven years old and made of summer.
In line for art class and just effervescing, he
is a light bulb – is a light bulb late to class he is
late to class because a goddess curled
up on his chest this mourning

finds his heartbeat comfortable and breathes
all the days he exhales calls them perfect
he is perfect now. Months later
I tell her this and she smiles, but
she must protect and some nights he glows

too bright to sleep; keeps garden hose
in school bag and smokes Lipton
while I clothe my grief in metaphor
and I wave my words and it's gone [you're
gone] He shows me the texture of nights wound slow with smoke

and stars all ruby white lightning from the tongue
licks syllable to candelabra and chews Isiah down crystalline
He is a light bulb is a light bulb laughing
and coloring in classrooms laughing
he pulled a trick you see, leaves

his seat empty this week, spat
cracked teeth red through rehab instead
you see three teeth through a cone piece lit
invisible sea swells amphetamine then returns
singing songs. Scaling razor wire in search of a decent coffee:

He is a lighter pressed to eye bulb spills
cortex cigarette burns yesterdays away
like carapace and leaves a cicada jigsaw
surface scent of ash wound wherever he slides
like if he cremates himself slow

no one would notice his charcoal insides.

He is a light

is alight

is alighting

on any melody just to keep warm, sings

amazing grace how sweet the sound thrusts its fist
down his throat and drags up a light bulb hanged
from heartstrings screams; "look pa these are my wings

you told me to look within – I found them
pa look at me sing and look at me fly
one last time I feel [almost] alive!"