

## Fire season

When the fires finally come  
webs are hung with ash,  
dry as winter skin on every strand.  
A layer lands on our cars  
and on the news they warn  
not to wipe it away—rough  
as sandpaper, they say,  
abrasive with its chemical burn.  
I'm weary of these everyday aches,  
autumn moon obscured  
by pollutants, the half rhyme  
of ochre and smoke or  
the rabbit running for its life  
through my headlights, premonition  
of violence. I think of  
speech therapy in fourth grade,  
*red rabbit runs, red rabbit runs,*  
a piece of wood, grape flavored,  
pressed to my tongue,  
except on this island the bunnies  
are beige, a lineage of  
domesticated mammals let loose,  
becoming wild. When I tug  
the door, unsettled ash swirls  
to meet my lips, tongue,  
full forests burned to flakes  
that taste like an ending.  
In the dream I am carrying  
the wrong man's baby but  
love it anyway, cannot believe  
how much I love it, gutted  
to wake to its fiction. For weeks  
the smoke lingers, ash falls.  
We almost get used to it.  
A spider makes its way inside  
and I smother it, press down  
until its limbs give, oh god,  
oh god, what will our children  
get used to?