

Guest Room

Our children were conceived
in a carved maple bed sent
from Milwaukee on the train
by my husband's grandmother in 1937.

Last night, celebrating thirty-five years,
we turned back its eyelet sheets,
the floor seeming to lower beneath us,
the bodies of all the women

my husband *could* have married
crowding around the foot
of our bed, handing us their weary
hearts, struggling to remember

him. I offered them my hands, fingernails
with sunken moons. Our shadows blended
on the wall. Through the open window
I saw glaciers, snow folded

in their laps, and wondered if they were
breathing. This was the same
carved maple bed where, so many years ago,
the stork left our children in the dark of night.

The Holding Room

In a plowed field at the rim
of the southern Utah desert
one of those Schnebbley brothers

found connected bones,
the skull of a young girl,
and a set of terrible blue toenails.