

KIMBERLY DRIGGERS

Departure

On the first afternoon in weeks
without a thunderstorm

my father and I sit on the porch
admiring his handiwork, a hummingbird feeder

made from a Blanton's bottle,
hung from the limb of an infected Magnolia,

the leaves riddled with holes,
each hole with a yellow halo.

I am always planning his funeral in my head.
Our small town, the too-late blooms

of azaleas, the sandy ground,
things I could easily leave behind

if I knew he'd stay with me forever
in my childhood room.

The hardwood floors, my unfinished
drawing of a fawn on chipboard,

the walls he painted pink
are just now beginning to crack.

When he goes out to walk the dog
I leave without even saying goodbye.

And because it was too heavy,
because he wasn't home to help me,

because like him I have little patience,
I shove my suitcase down the stairs,

where it hits the wall
and leaves behind black scratch marks.



When I call him from the airport
to tell him what I've done, he says

I knew it was you, call when you land.

KIMBERLY DRIGGERS is a native Charlestonian and poet with a Bachelor of English from the College of Charleston and an MFA from the University of Arkansas. Her poems have appeared in *Southeast Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Salamander*, and elsewhere.

