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Aeons of Wishes

Ralph Salisbury

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AEONS OF WISHES

the pear and the plum leaves remind me of children
scratching hundreds of matches flared red
against a sky as gray as asbestos

my mother comes back to life as when she
brought her own mother back
not screaming cancer at her intestines but calm
and giving me cookies a substitute grandma the one
resurrection my Christian mom could give
her "Wild Indian" son who was four
and bored by all the lovey talk and strangers' names
and finally stole some kitchen matches which
hit with a rock cracked like pistol shots

Dad drunk and shooting at ghosts again
myself my mother's "little man"
begging him to behave

he grew quiet then
quieter still
too quiet now for his kid
thirty some years of naughtiness gone
into wish
for understanding

a pear and a plum
one mine and one belonging to
the grandmother next door
two Independence Days
ago we lit her Mexican fireworks
hidden for years from the city's safety laws
and liberated the sky of Monroe
Street Madison Jefferson and
Friendly the best president of all my three
year old daughter who chanted "whoopee
I'm a Cherokee" voted for him

she's five this fall
her birthday on Halloween a week ago
the pear and the plum
leaves birthday candle flames aeons of wishes
starring asbestos sky