Her Clues

Marjorie Power
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Gull tracks, hieroglyphs—her printed pages lead and follow me: lining the streets which choose my steps, her phrases glow like Jack-o'-lanterns, like street lights glaring their slight pink on potential crime. In my mind of minds she makes perfect sense less and less and more and more.

With his fingertips, my child makes a night sky happen, the stars like grains of salt, a chain reaction of lights on the library computer screen. Outside the plate glass windows, rain falls straight down, in chords, the repetition of some final word.

All afternoon rain comes down, all afternoon my child plays with the sky, choosing seasons, nebulae, constellations—then a math game. Suddenly, the rain doesn't fall and we go home through grass going up in a cheer, whole stadiums of green blades rising at once while her clues glisten in puddles: you have lost, you have won, you are grass, pavement, air through which everything flows in its very own blindness. You are a verb on a cup hook, a lower case letter, a run-on sentence; a covered wagon, a chariot, a toy car parked in a tow-away zone. Take care, for you are the language scribbled on the bottled drifting note.