

When All The Dandelions Have Wilted, the Scratch of Tobacco is So Much Less Damning

desperation
is best described by all the places
i let you sink your teeth,

my crazy eyes, bedpost, neck,
secrets, lunch, pitiful bouquets
of dedication

all in exchange for a battalion of
feather light and derision

i whispered don't you love me
knowing full damn well
you'd dressed your eardrums up
in beeswax and their sunday best

impervious
to sin and my lips—
a tsunami of certain

mama remembers,
better than i do,
how all the white girls i always
wanted to play with
looked at me. tells me

suzanne
grow your own garden. love
where the topsoil is not dead. always
chase what has been touched by sunshine. never
a russian blizzard. or anything too
white to be washed.

i say
mommy
i was made for that kind of harvest. can
fly kites and irrigate the hollows of cheeks
with my own sacrifices
just like the best of them

i am a rose
i am in bloom and
didn't i know how to love
before the winter came?