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HEARTBREAK 101 IN 3-PART SIMILE

by Jim Davis

Grilled sweet corn, baby. Hawks 3-2 over the Blues and an apron that said *London, Paris, Rome, St. Louis* in red stencil. When he slept, white grubs with black heads covered him from jaw to splintered toenail, cracked heel, he'd been walking and said maybe I was born to walk, or maybe I was born to hold onto things which can't be held: sunlight, dream, most soups – thence his passing away, in the traditional sense since there was nothing left to do. He could untie anything

with his teeth: dependent arising. Fire, red wide long and terrible. He lived into his 80s with his sister in the bed beside him—two misers eating rhubarb pie, drinking chicken stock, raising rare birds, cleaning fish bowls of water, neon gravel, ceramic divers, castles... no fish. I wish I had been good enough for Allegheny, he said, the college he couldn't get into, but his sister did. He would have found a wife there, career, new shoes. He drinks black tea, orange

slices dipped in sea salt. The ghosts of their garden apartment have rearranged the furniture, bent rabbit ears on a heavy Magnavox. He watched a lot of local hockey. He looked up a stalk of potpourri, named it “wet wood lying in water” and used it to stoke a fire, which he named “dependence” and let it do what it did which he knew would someday end. He named his sister Gotama, braided her hair every morning, brushed it nightly. It is easy to fall in love with heavy silent snow.