

Losing Solomon

We estimate a man by how much he remembers.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Things seem to take on a sudden shimmer
before vanishing: the polished black loafers
he wore yesterday, the reason for climbing
the stairs, even the names of his own children

are swallowed like spent stars against the dark
vault of memory. Today the toaster gives up
its silver purpose in his hands, becomes a radio,
an old Philco blaring a ball game from the 40's
with Jackie Robinson squaring up to the plate.

For now, it's simple; he thinks he is young again,
maybe nineteen, alone in a kitchen. He is staring
through his own reflection in the luster and hoping
against hope that Robinson will clear the bases
with a ball knocked so far over the stadium wall
it becomes a pigeon winging up into the brilliance.

And perhaps, in one last act of alchemy,
as Jackie sails around third, he will transform
everything, even the strange and forgotten face
glaring back from the chrome, into something
familiar, something Solomon could know as his own.

—Sean Nevin