

Alicia Casey

At Twenty-Four

We longed for hope and water, for downpour.
Predawn life and art unstuffed from its crow-
black funeral suit. We were sinful extroversions,

flat tires. We thrived on air loss at the summit
of Humpback Rock, Blue Ridge vertigo, pines of
unknown growth. We grew on our own beginnings,

wicked as syrup, sweet and thick, the illusion
of night settled like a drop of blue food color
spiraling to the bottom of a water glass.

Blackout curtains denied the sun as we dreamt;
the morning ignored us like last night's dishes
and went on its way. Today, your future is a ball

of bread dough rising, a flicker of spark sucking wind
and flaming, your notebook's indelible scrawl. Forget
blood of co-cola and whiskey, your feet and their desire

to be planted. Forget Kentucky long enough
to reclaim it like a sentence you don't remember
writing or the truck, buried in kudzu since late July.