

## Empty

Boxes of erasers and paperclips  
sugar packets strewn, pens and tissues  
a dried carnation, creased store lists  
the dusty surface cluttered with breath mints  
pennies tossed in as afterthoughts  
his upright dresser entrusted to his daughter  
I am the emptier, the one who will empty  
each drawer, my back aches from the bend  
and pull of bottom drawers, I peel back  
the years, find a calendar from 1958  
a branch still sticky with sap, an eye mask  
to help him sleep, a bag of licorice,  
a toothpick, all boxed and bagged  
the dresser empty, dusted, polished  
even the alarm clock has stopped blinking.