

Perhaps it was
that morning I laid
next to my mother,
fingering consolation
out of a prayer bead.
Awake to the slowing
downbeat of my own breathing,
as I watched her pendulum stop.

Perhaps it was
that dinner where she
and I spent our words
so carelessly,
forking each other apart.
Sentences left incomplete,
morsels of failure
picked from our teeth.

Or perhaps it was
that morning
I let her carry me,
with her mother's voice, taught me
how to map the territories between
her hair line and her jaw.
With her own eyes reflecting
lessons of resentment and joy.