

Chrissy Ballinger

**Dead Animal**

He was eating eggs and thinking how fish swim,  
flowing smoothly through her veins--

pink salmon.

Crunch of garbage topping with the clatter of dinnerware.

Scalloped edges just above bare knees  
grandma's apron bow is tied tight in the back

but hair dishelved, carefulness is forgotten,  
the wicks smoke profusely as warm wax splatters

and water spills softly over the cloth,  
soaking spotted on the crackle carpet.

Can it hold?...Who cares.

The draperies sweetly frame the windows

as a blissful breeze flows through  
carrying the scent of squirrels in the yard, stiff but steaming hot.