If, in October

I should be driving past a row of brick-and-shingle bungalows and maple leaves are sticking to the sidewalk, and a rain-glossed school bus starts to swing its yellow bulk around the corner,

there you are again—framed in a wavy leaded window, watering a long-fingered philodendron while the Victrola clatters out Landowska’s version of the Little Preludes through the glass

and I am nine years old again—and you, the center of my small universe, are the love of my life, to whose powdered presence I come home blissfully, day after dangerous day

utterly innocent of a distant time when you will turn from me and withdraw into my archive of losses that the rising dust will dim, then darken, then obliterate.