Owl Question
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I am bent over a sink of heavenly suds
   my hands moving like angels in wind
when I find myself weepy with work I will never
   make done. Beside me a garbage bag opens
and fills like some hungry lung and my newest shoes
   wear the fine lines of age. Even as I gaze
at the just-folded laundry I am seeing the first shirt
   I will open the way a diver opens water.
As a child I wondered at my mother’s lost days
   in the polite lines of banks and supermarkets:
her head bowed as if in grief. Later I read we each lose
   years looking for lost objects and waiting for red lights
to change. One third of our earthly time passes on in our sleep.
   After one bill is paid another moves close like an enemy.
It’s no wonder cavemen left only their own bones
   and a few reddened sketches of the hunt. My life story
is a series of telephone bills paid too slowly and dental visits
   for cavities I can’t feel. Have I mentioned the car tags
I lost in the couch while kissing? They seem such a waste—
   these days I barely remember—doing the work that has no
meaning, the work that will whirl on above me when my body
   has crossed its arms to everything
and dirt loosens and falls into my heart like rain.