

Half burnt rusting carcass
frozen mattress burst into flames
smolder in snow
turn black
charred garagedoor ashes
melted remnants
locked up remains
displayed
beneath frozen fire hose water
these things
washed out the door into the dirt
the hard ground
a cold reminder
night after Christmas
watch the house drop
below scorched and ornamented sky.
Remember mornings
try and stay awake
in my old car with coffee
the driveway has disappeared
now ashes and ice
we sat up
staring through t.v. windshield headlights
a smoldering show of memories
we watched.
They said looters would come
and steal the plumbing
the black copper pipes
ran through rafters of my basement childhood
let them come.
I only heard about the unknown neighbors
I was at work
while they
they grew up from the yard like shrubbery
looking up
mouths open
seeing breath and smoke
the axes
the men in big boots on the roof
given the right by badges
to vandalize
"save the house!
the garage machinery bicycle television breezeway artwork"
all are gone
they are gone
transformed by flames
deformed and melted
contorted mangled bent limp and broken
swallowed
into the cold wet earth
a steaming archeological find
let them come.

The Gift

by Rhet Lickliter