ELAINE MINTZER

Bridge Night, 1962

when he pinned my arms behind me
and said those things in my ear so softly
it could have been the static
hum of the dust motes

I threatened to cry out and he said go ahead
but I knew it would be shame on me
because I heard how our parents in the other room laughed
and clinked china cups on china saucers

how still the air in his room how sharp
the shafts of light that cut through the blinds
the cowboy sheets on his brother's bunk bed
the lucky horseshoes the unexpected push
of his breath on my cheek

how I said I'm not kidding
and he said go ahead