

Recipe

Lumpy mashed potatoes
the skins still on but
whipped in
along with butter
some Velveeta
and spice

she is a good cook
a conscientious hostess
a minister's wife

and meals at her house
are always a pleasure of
good conversation and a
full, warm belly

He was effeminate
at age nine
more interested
in makeup and fashion
than any sport but
smart—oh he
could list off
the varying shades
of eye shadow, base
and lip color
in any given line:
Maybelline, Mary Kay
Clinique

She worried
but knew if she loved him
enough
lead him nightly
through the scriptures
built in him a desire
to do right
he'd be okay

one summer, his
fifteenth he told
them
he was gay

all he wanted

was to find the right man
settle down into
a long-term relationship
and still be
their son

Tonight
she is whipping
the potatoes
skin and all
butter, spice, Velveeta
into a swirl
of lumps
and trying and trying to smooth
things out
spinning the spoon
with her tired hands
balanced between her apron
and the counter

the bowl hits
the floor
potatoes everywhere
she expects the call to come
at the strangest times
*Mom, the blood-test
was positive*

Her guests are waiting