

MY OLDEST MEMORY

In the room of the goldenrod carpet
my dozens of ancestors smoke pipes.

And they clutch playing cards like red fans
or possibly oars for rowing

the lilac flotilla through fog
to a dim house in a new country.

I am a son in the doorway,
paralyzed between kitchen and pallor.

No one cares because they are old
and accustomed to specters, but one

who can't see past her knuckles
like amethyst spoons

tells me this is my birthday.
Impossibly good news.

LUKE DALY