

## Like Clay and Shale



Rachel Leonard

When the first frost came and snuffed out my marigolds,  
his cigarette butts bloomed in my clay flower pots.

On Christmas we drank watered-down lemon vodka and toasted  
to diesel-flavored gas station coffee and cold leather car seats.

His calloused hands carved my bed into a warm wooden bowl,  
where our porcelain bodies rested delicately like eggs.

By spring the frost melted and his pocket change puddled  
on my nightstand. Morning was rich with the scent of Parliaments

and the gasps of matches scraping brick. He was rough,  
like clay and shale; I burned slowly for him.