Less Than a Year
Nick Porcella

Dad, I know. I know that you
Put all kinds of work
Into our old house,
But it’s time to sell her.

It pains me too to think
About new inhabitants
Pulling out your forsythia
And upgrading the countertops.

I like our countertops.
That was where mom always
Made pie crust and
Wrapped birthday presents.

But they bought it.
They—I don’t know who.
They’re coming from
Cleveland or Seattle or something.

They have a down payment.
They passed inspection.
“Jack, that backyard is
Big enough for a pool!”

I can’t swim, none of us can.
Remember when you used
To throw the baseball to me?
When mom and I used to picnic?

Now a swimming pool.
It’s not ours anymore.
Why should we care what
They do with our—their—house?
I guess I shouldn’t care
About anything
That isn’t mine anymore.
It might as well not exist.

Goodbye house! Good
Bye! I just hate that we
Have to leave. How long
Ago was the service?

It’s just you and I.
One day I got a call
From you to tell me
Happy news, happy...

‘I’m going to try it,
I’m lonely and this new
Place is empty. It’s nothing,
Really, it’s nothing.’

I couldn’t believe it.
I guess why does it matter?
When we left the house
The new owners were ready

With a sledgehammer.
I’m sure they ripped out the
Countertops.
Put in a pool.

Dad, I love you. I’ll have to
Understand somehow.
Once things are gone, they’re
Gone. No use thinking otherwise.

She’s been gone
Less than a year.
I’ll have to understand
Somehow.