

Someone Asks Me Again Why I Always Write About Fire and I Struggle to Explain how the Permanence of Burning Helps Me Sleep at Night

The bark splits, cracks, crumbles,
flexes in hands of unsuspecting men.
My father has always been careful
to give dowries only of wood
because they can burn, leave room
for escape into smoke and other
mirrors. My sister, less prone to
destruction, will hand a pile of twigs
to her boyfriend and not even think
about kerosene. I, however,
will pile kindling, cardboard,
paper and brush, whole trees
and dried boards
from abandoned houses,
ready at a moment's notice
to trace forests with gasoline.