**Brown Poem**

Film of smoke in my mouth and nostrils, wispy and acrid, a veneer. She sat in a bean bag chair, a misshapen kidney, legs bent at the knee. A burner smoking chicory in the corner; Autumn

leaves like fluttering ballerinas reach the ground and crinkle when stepped on or blown away. Dvorak’s 7th from the sad years on the hi-fi, her glasses slide down to the tip of her nose. Smoke

rising up the curtains like a vine. Last laps of love, felt once, before we became boring, a *NY Times* crossword never finished on the table with rubber eggs and spit bacon fat. Newsprint,

news fit to print, print all dying. Easing into the water slow, a suicide or an accident like Whitney Houston. The greatest love of all would have been our children, but we never made it.

A ‘T’ in the road--- no goin’ down to the crossroads. No deals with Legba. The cat stretches at Her feet, looks distracted by sleep and missed opportunities. “Meow,” it says, but she wants to

say something else entirely, I can tell. Sorry for all this? Perhaps. She should be. Or maybe it is I. The smoke coming in thick makes it hard to see through. A veil of all that will be left unsaid. If I

were to come down from my perch, see this as life instead of a commercial for public television, We might really have something. I sip my scotch, lowland smoky, her face a portrait of grace.

She has no idea what I have come to do.