JAYE SIMPSON

JULES

a blunt thunderstorm delivered her
to the doorstep of her kohkum
her mother paying hundreds of dollars on a cab
from winnipeg to dauphin to dump
her off, but girl did she get rowdy
a flying fist & sharper tongue.
used to fight with her haida uncle
& swear in cree,
heard them talk rude
& ran them down the street
until a train took a limb
until a storm took her four.
until more than enough was never good enough.
my mother, a child in the storm,
a storm begetting storm
a weather pattern unmatched
a sideways water
a means of knowing
all lightning & swears
she, the reasoning for more
a terrible knowing
a prairie storm
caught in grey,
swirling from frances to cordova
auntie says mark would say "i'm not going out with you like that"
and mother would say "stay home then"
when she tells me i dress like her,
a beautiful stubborn & how much she thinks jules
would adore me, love who i became,
the LOUDEST girl in the room
an auntie's laugh at five years old
always changing my clothes just like her
auntie keeps calling me jules
keeps saying sorry
keeps saying i look like jules
keeps saying sorry
keeps laughing
"ha ha jules—

i mean—
sorry—"
i tell auntie:
"i feel her in the storms y'know,
the before weather and the during and the after
when the wind jolts my stomach
like just before the first bump on a roller coaster
i can see her in the falling leaves
on commercial drive
on the number twenty bus
swearing outside of dressew
and bumming a smoke on hastings—
i see her everywhere"
she says: "in the mirror too i hope"