

What I will lose

I have heard it's the hippocampus
that is damaged first.

New memories slip,
cannot find purchase.
I wonder what I will lose.

Will it be what we see on our walks?
Will I forget each happy rummage of dogs
you point out at the park,

the crepe myrtle, its embossed bark,
its pink flowers—lolly hot?
Will I lose the way home?

I have heard the oldest memories
are the last to leave.

Will I keep the day I found the mice
in the wheat bin?

The moment I lifted the lid

to a wild current of brown bodies,
their desperate toes and tails
circling a small sea of grain,

striking out for land they could not find.

The cats were called into the shed

and the door closed behind them.

What will become of the day
a dingo was close
and my mother told me to stay inside?

The wet red lash
of its tongue hanging above
the dry dirt of the road home.

Will the stories stay,
lit like old candelabra?

The talk of how those wild dogs howled
their strange long strokes of yearning
into dark skies.

The place where water
ran through the bush, and no one could say
what it was they saw,

only what they felt,
and left the prickling air
to whatever creatures lived there.