

for your own good

i knew something once. i mean, i've always
had a dog's vision—grass the color of a pressed beige
button down. but at least i used to know

something. when the morning birds
went off like fireworks and fireworks
were still a federal right. now, all i see

is the boys who light them,
running. but after the whole thing
with the chains

and the rock, it makes sense,
i guess, that we're all scared
of light

and vultures—that the boys who make fire
now can't stop, pause, see
what they created. i used to

know something. something about it being unfair
that i can't see my breath
in summer. something about a thin,

scratchy towel. there was a window imprinted
with someone else's
greasy face. but it's all second-hand

sources. seven, stomach distended
in a photo of me, standing
in front of a waterfall. i felt like i should've said

something
when they were done
lighting the thing—*thank you*

or *run!* instead,
i laughed. my
bad. sitting on top of another family's

jungle gym with my mom—she said
it was dangerous
and she was right. the fuses chased

their own tails until they bit
them off, but i guess, i blame myself
for believing her.