**Debris**

Kent Leatham

 *“Nothing can be done*

 *but by inches”*

 *(Adrienne Rich)*

When our downstairs neighbor died, we all pitched in—

his out-of-state son, my roommate and I, local friends—

and three days later, filled the yard with all he had:

the usual books and artwork, chairs, lamps, the bed

with its odd frame of horses’ heads and hooves, plus

the stranger stuff: a jar of dice and glass eyes, Toys-R-Us

games never sent to grandkids never born. It all sold

or was tossed, the way lives go. For helping out, the son told

us we could keep what we wanted, free, so we did.

I took a leather ottoman, a painting of an unknown kid,

some old Clapton discs. That was five months past.

It’s November now, cold. Digging for a blanket last

week in the back room, I found a Walmart sack

with another bag inside, sealed, and in that, ash.

My roommate thinks it must have been deliberate.

The son had said he wasn’t ready to tackle it,

the choice of where to scatter, or in what portions;

must have quietly added it to our small fortunes.

So there he sits, the old man, on the floor.

We take what we get from life. There isn’t more.