**Bone Memories**

Lorrie Ness

They are the beads

moored around her neck.

Canines polished by the skin

above her breasts. They form

needle-thin crescent moons

arcing through her ears.

She casts bones to glimpse the future

and her ancestors speak

through the scatter.

They foretell of winter nights

spent chiseling by the fire.

There, she’ll carve

jaw into a comb and rib

into an awl. On the solstice,

her hands will cradle a skull —

rest its curve within a coil of stones.

She’ll burn sage in its open basin.

Smoke will rise like a soul to the stars,

where people live as long

as they aren’t forgotten.

Her necklace rattles in the wind

and the vision recedes.

She brings bone to lip. The flute

sounds shrill and tastes

of her family.