**Weightless**

Michelle McMillan-Holifield

I don’t recall

what book I was searching for

or if I even had

an agenda.

The moment I opened

the box, everything left me.

Nightfall, I was still excavating,

fingers perching lightly

lest pages sever

from spines,

edges crisp, flake away.

I studied bindings

like vertebrae

of some extinct species,

words like ancient text:

Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic.

I deciphered, made notes,

wept, praised,

finally slept.

So long without a child,

I had almost forgotten

the idea of ancestry,

that some lineages,

are carried through history.

Others crumble

like weak bindings:

swept away

by something simple

as breath, crushed

by something weightless

as a shed feather.