**The Journal**

Olga Dugan

hard back cover, black as winter’s

long shadows, opened to an entry

she wanted me to read when her

sun was risen elsewhere, and yet

on the page loomed so much light,

not denying illness, but giving

weight to the best of becoming

too broken to stand—a collection

that began with a joke for students,

*were I a poem, I’d be Eliot’s gangly*

*Wasteland, or Brook’s Bean Eaters’,*

*the couple’s thin and meager meal*

that ended with recalling the wind’s

howl at a rippling seaside where no

tears were, just thoughts of her

garden, Frangipanis’ pink blossoms,

Forsythias in yellow bloom, rivers

she must have visited in a waning

memory, stretching thawed limbs

the earth over, and then a promise

aimed at me, that given a chance,

the waxing moon well-dressed

in clouds with stars bopping along

the blue ether of a fulgent night

sky would swath this young son’s

grief in joy and lull away his fears

of ever being here without her