

confetti

by Anthony M. Powers

i've started writing down all the things i want to say to you,
the things i know you don't want to hear,
the things i know i shouldn't say—
all of those sappy, stupid things.
i've started writing these things down
on blue-lined notebook paper
or really anything i can get
my tendonitis-ridden hands on.
then i separate them
rip them
into little strips.
sometimes the words get torn on accident.
i write those ones out again.
and sometimes i tear them a second or third time
and it just keeps going like that
until i get it right.
then i take these little strips
and stuff them into my pockets
or into an empty pack of cigarettes
and then i drive around
in the middle of the night,
wasting half a tank of gas,
chainsmoking,
blasting old punk music
and sad British pop songs.
with every smoldering cigarette i slip
through the crack in my window,
one of these little slips of paper
goes with it.
i do this until i run out
of cigarettes

or coffee
or slips of paper
and then i drive home
and lie awake in bed
until i have to go in to work.
i don't know why i do this,
but i can tell you i'm doing it for myself.
maybe other people find these slips of
"i miss you"s or
"i wish i could tell you how much i love you"s
and maybe it does something for them.
maybe i've saved someone without really trying.
but that's not what this was ever about.
this has always been for me.
this is me
taking those things i so badly want to say
and letting them go.
i hope they get turned into a bird's nest
or picked up by a street sweeper
or that my cigarette butts set them on fire.
because after all this time
i know that all those things i shouldn't say to you
but wish i could
are just trash.
and that's all they'll ever be.

