

Air Conditioning Bill

by Jennifer Donnell

Back then, your feet on mine, rhymed,
as we indulged in the careful exploration of toe on toe,
our blankets snug,
we were practicing being grown up,
young lovers turned parents,
and I would tell you that, sometimes.

Doesn't this feel so much like we're grown ups now, I'd say,
but you didn't like that because you
wanted to pretend we already were.

Your face at nineteen
is something I'll always love more
than other faces,
even as soured as yours became
from the years,
work,
tears,
infidelity (plural),
lack of love, mistakes,
missteps, our cold feet.

I left you one winter when your feet stayed
on the other side of the bed
and you told me it was selfish
to want to warm myself with touch.

The last night, I shivered in bed until three a.m.,
the blankets wouldn't work,
but I reassured my heart
that my next love would be warmer.

He was.

And our air conditioning bill was so high we could't afford it.

