

Choke

Milk bones, cat food. Someone else's grandmother's
stewed tomatoes. Chocolate covered this, that.

A pepper so hot I left it on the windowsill
of the dark bar where I was dared, drank

a quart of milk to balm the burn. A bird
the size of my fist on prom night: surprised

by the legs, dressed in paper and bound
at the joints like something in need

of restraining. My words, yours. Nothing
in place of everything I wanted.