CHRIS GIRMAN

How a Boy Gets Broken

I guess because my first was a small boy in Lima, 19,
brown like the dirt beneath our feet, the two of us on a bench
outside the university, not sure because I'd never told.

Or in my room where I never got hard and he didn't seem to mind,
my body shaking, shivering, his hand like a tiny paw, so sweet
the way he caressed me, scooped lyrics into my ear like bath salts.

If I've compared this man to dirt & animal I should perhaps say why:
the way my cats roll into the back of my spine or sunset
plucks tears from I-don't-know-where or the smell

of hot sand on my father's chest or sheep shit on the Choquequirao trail.
Perhaps this is how stone is broken or the way melons lean to ground,
his marrow to my bone, how the horizon steaks to land, settles.

JASON TANDON

Morning Song

Above Chocorua's
craggy face
there is a thumb-sized
patch of blue,
the lake and low hills socked in by fog.

When I was a boy
that was all the start I needed
to rip this life
to shreds.