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Croquet With My Father Once My Mother Passes

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Amelie Langland

**CROQUET WITH MY FATHER ONCE
MY MOTHER PASSES**

Your madras swishes gnats
as you lean in and say you're happy today.
I mallet croquet bodies,
driving the pastel balls across the yard.

You lean in, and say, you're happy today,
but you mean to say, *your mother's here*.
I drive the pastel balls across the yard.
Gnats buzz up my nostrils.

You explain how Mom talks to you still.
Gnats buzz up my nostrils.
A pink bud browns on a low branch
bobbing in a gust. Gnats crawl into my ears.

Hanging from a bottom branch,
a blossom bends like her finger,
edged in off-white. I can only remember
her loving everything in the garden, watering,

nurturing. A cherry blossom blows away.
You lean in and say, *Mom was happy when
she read Agatha Christie under that tree*.
I mallet croquet bodies, driving them across her yard.

Gnats buzz up my nostrils.
A pink bud browns on a low branch.
A blossom bends and falls.