

Boxes: A Prose Poem

By: Jorri Heil

I had just had an MRI because I was always dizzy; everything I saw shook like there was an earthquake. Numbers on my alarm clock bounced like basketballs and my clothes danced, even though no one was wearing them. A doctor had injected my arm with chemicals that glowed neon green in my brain's folds to show if a tumor was the cause before I was slid into a plastic, casket-like tube and told not to move. Then, Mom and I came straight from the hospital, Great Grandma, to clean out your apartment. While Mom sorted knickknacks into cardboard boxes, I sat in your recliner and pushed the buttons, pushed the buttons, pushed the buttons on the remote that ejected you in slow motion from the seat. The base of the recliner rose then tipped forward almost spilling me on the floor before I pressed reverse. I ate every Hershey Kiss—kisses you shouldn't have had—from your glass dish. You could not say chocolate would give me zits. And after I used your toilet with the six inch plastic riser, I pinched each pill in your seven-slot organizer between my fingers to examine the colors, shapes, smells. When we left, tears trampled down my cheeks. Mom said everything was fine. You were free of pain. But I imagined Mom putting my mystery books, training bras, and bean-bag chair into boxes marked "sell."