

## Hot Flash

The hot flash wakes me in the dark,  
A pool of sweat between my breasts, cooling.  
I throw off the covers.  
The heat dissipates,  
Radiating into the room  
Warmth and moisture,  
Evaporating into the shadows.

The gift of my middle age, this nocturnal blaze.  
Awake, I stoke the fire.  
Some nights, sorrowful, I kiss my broken scraps  
And offer them as kindling.  
I pile on unloved fears, grateful for release.  
Some nights, I rage through the house  
Searching for hidden disappointments  
To set on fire.

What I have longed for,  
What I have desperately held,  
I toss on the heap.  
Content, I lay, as they are consumed.  
Till I remain only

A flame

A point of light

Afire.