Disabling Assumptions

Note
1. I am grateful to Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, from whom I learned about this novel.

Works Cited

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Reflections from a High School Poetry Slam: A Teacher to Her Student

“I have hated the words and I have loved them, and I hope I have made them right.”

—Markus Zusak

Just this morning, you
read your desiccated prose,
while you cursed words and their
reluctance to speak for you.

I watched as you crammed
your argument into a thesis,
like a traveler stuffing clothes into a
suitcase much too small.

We sat at this very table,
placing periods and parentheses
while I listened to your litany of
“first,” “second,” and “in conclusion.”

But tonight, the lights are dimmed,
and poetry rolls off your tongue. Lines
break, and images fly round the room like
ghosts of childhoods past.

Others smile at what you’ve
resurrected. They recall
their own romps
through playgrounds, parks, and puddles.

But I smile because
I hear you—
falling back in love
with words.

—Kati Macaluso

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