

**C A L I F O R N I A
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**Maja Trochimczyk
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DEAR APOLOGY,

You are not a glove
that softly warms fingers.
You are not a lid,
snug to prevent sloshing.
You are not a hook removed
from the marlin's mouth.

You are just a costume—
cheap, gauzy dress up:
I'm sorry you feel that way.
I'm sorry IF I...

Instead, be tweezers
connecting your hand
to the pain, the blue-black splinter stuck
in the fleshy underside of my nail.
Pluck it out.

Were I as hollow as you
I might say, *Sorry*
to have to tell you this.

KM Kramer
Los Altos Hills, California

ECLIPSE

Dad passed.
Earth twice spun around the sun.
Local news chattered

about the solar eclipse on Tuesday.
The library offered eclipse glasses
to view the sun directly.

Unfiltered,
the sun could turn
eyes blind.

The glasses remind me of him.
How he stood
between my mother and me.

Shade to the fire of her.
Shield from her infrared anger,
nuclear reactions.

I don't know why
he stayed married to her.
Perhaps, like eclipse glasses,

to protect me.
Perhaps, like the glasses, he was
an enabler. Was he blinded, too?

*KM Kramer
Los Altos Hills, California*

ONE MOMENT:

dandelion fluff bounding in wind
—then a ravaged, knobbed stalk

dandelions bind the moments
before wind ravages their stalks

fluff binds to dandelions
until wind unwinds its hold

a dandelion fluffs the moment
before wind shakes the stalk

a dandelion is a moment of fluff;
the wind is God's knob to ravage

I'm bound to dandelions like fluff,
soon to be stalked by winds

a moment can fluff dandelions
or ravage me like a stalker

KM Kramer
Los Altos Hills, California