

Junior Division, Poetry  
Holly Fillier, Clarke's Beach

***Intercalative Dolour (an excerpt)***

*February*- Choked breaths struggle around nostalgia's ivory knuckles,  
But the mirror is layered in frost, my breath can't clear the glass.  
For all she's done, and all she hasn't,  
Every version of myself apologises to one another.

*March*- Sometimes, moments freeze into polaroids,  
Already a memory slipping river water through skeletal fingers,  
Half-ghosts woven into living breath.  
Sometimes, grief manifests over an empty grave.

*April*- That's all tragedy is-  
When you love.  
(It isn't enough.)

*May*- My sanguinary heart is scabrous,  
throbbing on each avarice, on each deluded daydream.  
Pattering like a toddler's footsteps,  
And aching like a scraped knee,  
Burning with a thousand unanswered birthday wishes.

*June*- Only a snapshot of a lifetime together,  
yet you are a toothache rotting saccharine into my soul:  
Burrowed with loss and leaking like a termites ship,  
or the eyes of maudlin girls.

*July*- Bolstering mirror shards of all who'd broken surrounding me,  
I slice shaking fingers on shattered glass edges,  
Hoping in their restoration I can say:  
*I've got these outgrown pieces of you here, if you'd want.*  
*Stabbed into my epithelial tissue, so all you see is your past.*

*August*- Much like an albumen-drenched chick flung from a nest,  
Calling in songs learned from its mother to come home,  
I am not ready.  
After all this time, I am never ready.

*September*- *I miss you. I've loved you,* I love you like a phantom limb-  
It aches in absence.  
The door's unlocked (if you ever feel like coming home).

