Architeuthis Clarkei,
the Giant Squid

None
yet caught,
though five or six

wash up each year,
too late, lamps
burnt out,

shark ravaged
and pale.
A great ghost drifting

with the current hangs
tentacle lures, but,
once stranded,

falls apart,
resembles wet paper.
*The journey began,*

it seems to say. *Not much
happened. The
end.* I poke

with a stick
to see
what moves. Easily,

the lid opens.
Beneath,
it's like the white

of an egg, this
blind eye
rolled. Nobody

walks the strand. The sky,
it's as dull as the squid.
*Another lost giant,*
another Gulliver,
I think, but this one,
here,

finished counting
to fall asleep
. . . one sheep,

two sheep, three sheep. . .
One can see,
in the distance,

a small town,
the white birds perched
on the black cliffs.
Tag Sale

A Barbie with gum in her hair, a Lite-Brite that may or may not turn on, and Monopoly played once or twice then stowed, the Chance cards missing, the Scottie Dog lost, the dice gone. Here, the Boggle bubble, cracked. In a milk crate beside the games, we have the tools: a hacksaw, a cordless Black and Decker drill, a Stanley hammer, a rat-tail file, a Phillips screwdriver. Here’s a Schwinn bicycle with dry-rot tires, and, arranged upon the lawn, an array of shirts and shorts, neckties, jeans and sundresses, tennis shoes and sandals that I suppose still have a little life left in them, and mismatched luggage--that Samsonite covered with a collection of bumper stickers, "This Car Climbed Pikes Peak,"

"See Onondaga Cave," but in the photo album I've just picked up and am flipping through (a bargain at $2, I suppose) everything looks new. Somebody must have died. I don't like to pry, it's none of my business, but why is a man in a tuxedo on a diving board?

On the next page, the same guy on and on, the story sometimes out of sequence. A pregnant woman in a bikini reclines in a kiddie pool. She's rubbing Hawaiian Tropic on her belly, grins lasciviously at the camera, followed by pictures of a girl's first communion, then more pictures of the man. He is heavier now, losing his hair, the 4th of July in the Rockies, two kids waving sparklers, a campfire, marshmallows on sticks, a Coleman stove, followed by a page of him posing beside an Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme, circa 1986, and now he's waxing it, now he's behind the wheel, and then we have the final photos in the album, the man bald, the woman with glasses and hair died blond (her roots showing), her arm around the shoulder of an elderly woman, her grandmother, perhaps, who sits in a wheelchair
decorated with helium balloons and pink-and-white crepe paper. It's her 90th birthday, according to the writing on the cake surrounded by two smiling nurses and confused children wearing pointed party hats, her blue-veined hands pressed flat upon the table.
Cappuccino

St. Francis of Assisi,
after he turned his back
on the imported
silk shirts and expensive
French wine,
and said no
to wanton women
and stopped singing
rowdy drinking songs
with the mercenary soldiers,
and started talking
to the bluebirds
and healing the broken
legs of cats,
his philandering days
fluttering away
with the monarch
butterflies
as he atoned
for a youth
of debauchery
and sin, donned
a simple, brown habit,
a length of rope
for a belt,
and the unusual, pointed,
super-sized hood
in Old Italian
called a "capuchin."
Funny
how metaphors
outrun
their origins--

and so the barista
at Volta Coffee, Tea & Chocolate
steams my milk

into a froth light
and airy, sprinkled
with cinnamon

and cocoa,
which covers, almost like
a Capuchin hood,

that which is
sweeter and darker
underneath.