

“A Death at the Office”

The news goes desk to desk
like a memo: *Initial*
and pass it on. Each of us marks
Surprised or Sorry.

The management came early
and buried her nameplate
deep in her desk. They have boxed up
the Midol and Lip-Ice,

the snapshots from home,
wherever it was—nephews
and nieces, a strange, blurred cat
with fiery, flashbulb eyes

as if it grieved. But who grieves here?
We have her ballpoints back,
her bud vase. One of us tears
the scribbles from her calendar.