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## In Defense of Objects

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MILTON KESSLER MEMORIAL PRIZE  
FINALIST

IN DEFENSE OF OBJECTS

Linda Dove

*An object...is what makes infinity private.*

*Joseph Brodsky, Watermark*

Unlikely winters: San Francisco and its trolley  
car stuck in snow, Bangkok blizzard white.

Flakes shake to life, bright and insular. Cities  
fade in the blur of a handmade storm.

Despite the dizzying effects, the eye rests  
there, at home in beauty's small arcade.

No sirens sound, no policemen sew their yellow  
threads to these streets. The past collects

on souvenirs, turning kitsch to treasure.  
When the Wedgwood knife falls

to the floor, shards of blue shed like tears.  
Yet the eye is safe here, even in pieces.

The pink Christmas ball shatters to an inner life  
of mirrors. It's what confounds the mendicant:

the object's pull, the need for pockets to keep  
stuff in. What amounts to wonder lurks in things,

whole or broken, near, as distant as the gray  
gargoyle where the eye's balloon comes to rest.

Rusted keys, horseshoe, rust itself, color of burnt  
sienna. The word itself: *burnt sienna*.

Petals pool beneath a tree. In morning light,  
the snow globe glows like a translucent papoose.