

## The Weight of the Dislodged

Removals have become the order of my season.  
Dust from behind my chisel settles like light white  
wool on my lungs. Yet I'm chilled, so many holes

poked clear through to the outside. Breezes blow in.  
I search for anchoring screws, find them heaped  
in time's grime. My hands are everywhere prying

in the kitchen insulation, plaster, twists of wire, twine  
balled up behind, and I get good at bracing myself  
against the weight of the dislodged, a cupboard

or door unhinged. I'm searching for proper tools—  
this end wrench is too small, this drill bit splits, a saw  
blade's blunt. But there's form in luck: occasionally

burls give way, or lug nuts loosen, shapes emerging  
beneath the tears. It gets easier to reach inside  
where I can't always see what I'm doing—

behind the porcelain sink say, there are indentations,  
evidence of the older sink and drain. And my desire  
finds beauty sometimes, especially when I can forget

the rest, startle instead at red rust cobwebs suspended  
from the underside of a shelf. One day I even feel  
lucky when from deep in sheetrock I jar loose

a wedding band. Someone once loved what I'm  
taking, and nothing's wasted, even in shadows lacing  
across bare white walls, light through my new screens.

— from *Portal*