

SANDY LONGHORN

We Live in Black & White

November

Dear Madame—

Be on your guard. There are secrets here
which I will seal with glue & string.

The woman I called mother by mistake
sends me gifts addressed by an anonymous hand.

She keeps her name well-hidden from the whitecoats.
Though they wish to track her down and pull

some quantity of that bold liquid from her veins,
they are mistaken in their belief of our relation.

If you know her whereabouts, assure her I am mute.

She sends photos from my youth in careful
order, posing and reposing me in a healthy body.

Why, in several shots I'm fairly blurry from the motion
of my limbs. There! Her shadow lingers in each frame,

her ardor a beaked thing that plucked at me.
We were a pleated pair. Our scarves charted

the catastrophe of wind as we walked
the ice-path home. Her gloved hand held me firm.

Please, *Madame*, find her. Tell her I am resolute.

—Your Beggar