

**From *A Last Glance*, by Pamela Hill Epps
(forthcoming)**

Fresh Kill

I still remember the blue and white striped shirt,
piled and worn the night you kissed me
for the first time 20 some years ago.

What was the poem you read to me
in an upstairs room of a friend's house?
Neither one of us sure of anything
but that we were alone and out of time.

I felt old even though I wasn't,
your lap and arms around me were all
I needed and the kiss was unexpected,
as romantic as the ee cummings poem I now remember,
her hand opening like the petals of a flower.

That old house in Philly in February
was as chilling as this recollection.
The years we spent undoing
that one kiss. These days our children
shuffle back and forth between us
like old men in slippers and we politely
inquire about the other's health or happiness.

But the mind is a trickster and throws memories
back at you without warning.
What does your memory bring to you in the morning
like a cat with last night's kill still fresh?