

○ THE REVOCATION

MAUREEN DANIELS

If there is one thing I do not regret,
it is climbing into my father's bed
that afternoon in New York City
five days before my mother
would have turned sixty.
He was already half-gone, half
soul sent to the next world, but still
I climbed into the bed beside him,
attached to all those life-death
machines and moved his head
so that it fell against my chest,
wrapped my arms around
the rest of him, my legs next
to his legs so that we were entwined.
I whispered all love words, all thanks
for life and how I would see him
every time I closed my eyes.
I wished him the safest journey
to what I imagined was a home
with my mother. And when he took
his last breath, his heart still beat
beneath my hand until the nurse
sitting beside us said *Now*.
But I did not let him go.
I stayed on that bed holding
the body of the man that I loved
until he cooled next to me.
Then I placed my father
back on the bed, removed the tubes,
the needles, the stickers
on his chest, opened and closed
his eyelids to see, for the last
time, my face in his.