Taylor Altman

The Music Lesson

Mozart knows nothing of my life,
the way my teacher places my hands
on the right keys, the way I fight him,

and the pointlessness of correcting mistake
after mistake when my mind refuses to learn.

The winter light is so clean it stings
a few hours after dawn. The fountain
brims with ice. The birds are trembling.

In six weeks, I guess, it will be spring.

My sister tells me that in my sleep
my fingers move, and I sing a little.

In the morning her bed is empty,
the pillow gone. Nothing can be right
until it has been wrong.

It is almost spring—almost—and
the flowers will open to the sound of March,
if I can hold out that long.