

“Shopping”

by Faith Shearin

My husband and I stood together in the new mall

Which was clean and white and full of possibility.

We were poor so we liked to walk through the stores

Since this was like walking through our dreams.

In one we admired coffee makers, blue pottery bowls,

Toaster ovens as big as televisions.

In another, we eased into a leather couch and imagined

Cocktails in a room overlooking the sea.

When we sniffed scented candles we saw our future faces,

Softly lit, over a dinner of pasta and wine.

When we touched thick bathrobes we saw midnight swims and
bathtubs so vast they might be mistaken for lakes.

My husband’s glasses hurt his face and

his shoes were full of holes.

There was space in our living room where a couch should have
been.

We longed for fancy shower curtains, flannel sheets,

Shiny silverware, expensive winter coats.

Sometimes, at night, we sat up and made lists.

We pressed our heads together and wrote

Our wants all over torn notebook pages.

Nearly everyone we loved was alive and we

Were in love but we like wanting.

Nothing was ever as nice when we brought it home.

The objects in stores looked best in stores.

The stores were possible futures and, young and poor,

We went shopping.

It was nice then:

we didn't know we already had everything.