Slush

Anne Pepper*
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slush

a photograph sits neatly on
rounded corner of kitchen cupboard
above the filled sink, smiling.

you pick it up look behind
while scrubbing the blank-faced dishes

no name, date written, just Kodak Kodak
Kodak, like the bear in winter
alaska whiteout without the i.

where, you wonder, has the i gone?

pictures without names are unclaimed
footprints in slush, could
belong to a new-booted neighbor

or ex-lover smoking djarum
clove cigarettes, your favorites before
quitting, two years ago, smoke stung your eyes.
now the soap-sudsy edges dance in
wavers through your saline lids, as
visions of the bread/tobacco aisles,

hands kneading hands, finding
the sweet cancer stalks, plucking them
gently, as once he fed his hands
your breasts, nipples, you
remember the name,
and the i.