

JANUARY GILL O'NEIL

A Mother's Tale

I tell my son
that the best poems
are written in the sand
and washed away with the tide.
I say, the moon controls the waves,
uses the wind to rake the shore.
It is an open invitation to fill
the world with words
because like seashells
you can never have too many.
I tell him to wade into the water.
Start a conversation with
the tiniest grain on the beach,
the one that catches his eye with its glint.
It will tell him everything he needs to know
about this moment, about how to stay in it
a little longer. It will tell him how to be,
for an instant, the thing he most wants
to become.