

## Everything I Have Is Mine to Lose

As a child, I had a chicken that slept  
in my bed. First, I lost the bed. Then,  
I lost the chicken. To soften my losses,  
my aunt bought me a dog whistle.

Last week, she returned from the casino  
sans her lucky coat. I took up the trumpet,  
thinking myself Satchmo reincarnate.  
At my first lesson, I lost that belief.

I played the slots. The fanfare of a dollar won  
was a comfort. I found my aunt's lucky coat  
and put it on. I lost my moral compass  
so I whistled for it. It came back.

Still, I kept the coat. I lost my husband  
to a woman with the face of a cut jewel.  
I whistled for my husband. My aunt flapped  
her bare arms. I lost my lucky coat.

Everything I had has gone to seed  
in the sump pump. I whistled for my husband.  
I lost my whistle. On my trumpet,  
the winner's fanfare is the song

of a clipped chicken. That everything I lose  
was once mine to have is a comfort.  
My husband's keys in the door  
is a sound only I can hear.