

February at the Johnsons'

JANA-LEE GERMAINE

A thin-mattressed twin not mine.
None of it mine—

not the white gas stove,
not the shining silver pans

I boiled canned soup in,
all I owned now halved,

boxed in the basement,
half the apple print dishtowels,

half the forks,
half the nesting bowls.

I got the measuring cup,
he the stock pot, the carving knife.

And he was in our bed, half
a mile down the road,

I in the Johnsons' back bedroom
answering the front door

to the mailman, or not at all.
At noon, I ran circuits

in the neighborhood,
two loops to make a mile.

Evenings, I'd fold and refold jeans.
I wrapped socks around trinkets:

Glass cat, sand dollar,
statue of the Graces.

If I read, I read *The Way of a Pilgrim*,
and if I prayed, I prayed

Have mercy on me,
Son of God, have mercy on me,

Penelope packing a box.

No, this is me, learning to divide a life.

