

Domestic Violence

He came home with Pandora's bags in hand.
I shelved and shook my head and breathed: *Not right.*
Cheddar: sharp instead of mild. Ranch: lite
instead of *Free*. Pears: fresh instead of canned
and Quaker rather than a cheaper brand
of oats. The jalapeños had sulfites.
He bought lard and water in a net, tight
girdle for bloated bacon sold as ham.

Two-percent, slow grits—didn't understand
my shopping list, did he? So why'd I shove
the wet, wadded bags into the trash, slam
the cupboards and tell him *Thanks* in reprimand?
Forget the hurled pots and heimlich hugs—
my short list made us victims of his love.

—Casualene Meyer