

LAURA KASISCHKE

## *Envelope Addressed to Me with Your Return Address*

The street we used to live on bore the name  
of a man who had to be told one day by a stranger,  
“Sir, sit down,” and then, “It seems  
your son has fallen from a train.”

And our town was named  
for the place in England from which  
our founding fathers were forced  
to flee one bloody day, so they  
stuffed their traveling trunks with all  
the shame they could take with them when they came  
to this new place, where they would say, “Let’s  
start all over here, but keep the same old name.”

And, although the wolf that mated with the mother  
of the neighbor’s dog  
in that shadow of the valley  
of the shadows  
was never seen again, Bailey

howls some nights exactly like  
a very bad memory that I myself  
had managed to repress, until now—

this businesslike envelope sent to my address, sealed  
by the very tongue that once, so lovingly, uttered  
a pet name I grew to hate. And

your name, too. *Your* name: The

darkest night of my life masquerading  
for decades as a name.