

## ***A Good Haunting*** **By Amy Notdorft**

I wish I knew how to believe in ghosts.  
So many places I used to go are haunted  
by strangers, and it's really hard to visit  
without the promise of a familiar face.  
It makes me wonder whose home  
I am currently haunting.

My address hasn't changed  
in over a decade, but I can't find  
the home I knew yesterday, except  
in pictures. The cats have changed,  
the children too. Baby flesh evaporated  
to reveal alien angles and sharpness.

I walk the same roads day after day  
after day and feel the missing buildings  
and trees like holes in my gum line,  
new life erupting awkwardly from the gaps.  
I run my tongue along the horizon  
and tell myself it will one day feel normal.

My toes settle into the earth and  
I will them to grow, to root me to this spot.  
Still everything recedes into a distance  
blurry with places I can no longer reach.  
One day I will open up, an uncomfortable gap  
in someone else's mouth. This is good.

I will not sand my children's cheekbones,  
will not trade my crooked teeth for a mouth  
full of headstones; the world is not a monument  
to the world. I do not believe in ghosts,  
so I must stop keeping house for them.  
A baby's gums ache, and I soothe her.

I do not take her teeth.