

By Trevino L. Brings Plenty

Small red tin box sealed in shrink-wrap, cut open
with pocketknife, pried apart, its goods aerate the
office. I pluck white sliced chalky cylinders; let them
simmer in my mouth. I exhale peppermint scent
through my nose. Cut open the official letter. A map
in letters on a white page. My teeth grind mints.
Photocopies slightly off alignment, I blur lines.
Equations disperse family through land documents,
position each generation. I am only fourth in line.
Some plots are gumbo after winter thaw. Sections
stitched together with extended relatives. This ritual,
personal death papers drafted. I am partial to this
grassland; the place of deer marks and porcupine
quills, ledger extrapolates history. I refold estate
document, place it back into its envelope.

Source: *Poetry* (June 2018)