Dialectical Materialism
by Susan Nyikos

Between the two of us, love swells and retreats
Like measures of the tide that sweeps
And rolls debris, helpless shards of crustaceans,
Foam cups, yesterday’s newspaper.

One of us reaches out to brush crumbs
Off the other’s chin just so we can touch and reap
Busy pheromones pelting against skin and nervous system—
But the other is moored behind forced smiles.

And then he leans in, walks his familiar fingers
Along the long S of the once-willing spine, rolls
The flowing silk blouse into tight creases. Underneath,
That which once flamed, lingers in cooling waves.

In the long light
by Carrie Farmer

I.
I place a kiss in your palm
Like a tiny shell
And your fingers close ’round it

II.
Emptied of unknown fauna
These tiny dwellings
Crush easily between teeth

III.
Long furrows in this sand are
Made of tiny shells
So light, they’ve shuffled to shore