

JULIE MORRISSY

## MANDOLIN

a simple metal object called the mandolin slicer  
before knives and whisks were electric  
its meandering edge brought from Ravensdale  
to Claremorris to Carrickmacross

to its final resting place in a three-bedroom house  
in Dublin, blighted with black rust and grime  
a short handle with zig-zagged plane  
a huge leap forward

the crinkle in the world imparted  
to a lock of deep-fried chips  
too basic to be called an apparatus  
it is an implement

it is unsophisticated and rudimentary  
helpless without the palms of hands  
squeezing its handle into raw potatoes  
etching patterns between the oil and grease

alongside cheap cuts of meat or fish from the harbour  
for a family of two then four then six  
idle the year my mother was born  
abandoned at the bottom of a drawer

with the wooden spoon and the butter knives  
but it rose again, hands wiped on an apron  
and at the table twenty years later  
there are crinkle cut chips and flat 7up

the dull, complicated mandolin at the floor of the sink  
rubbed and scrubbed and let dry with the delph  
an unexpected flourish  
the edge the neighbours did not know about

think of this corroded relic between a closed fist