BRIAN KOMEI DEMPSTER Give and Take

A ghost mother

stands at our front door,

witch daughter by her side.

Wind blows

through us.

Outside, each house lit

with jack-o'-lanterns squinting their triangle

fires. My son is a lion,

runs in circles screaming

"Hi hi hi."

He can't help it.

My wife Grace and I don't go out much. He's too

loud.

His head glows inside

with ancient women burning. Epilepsy is sacred. Epilepsy

is profane.

"Trick

or treat." I offer the candy bowl. *I have little*

left. My son can't eat

sweets. His meals

must be measured. The little witch takes a Starburst. *I can give*

this much.

My son slows, comes

to my side, his hand cold as stone. Brendan is

a cathedral, radiant

as Joan of Arc with her visions.

"Can I have another?"

her small hand grabs

at the bowl. I pull away.

Sorry.

No more.