

## Adam Crothers

### Clearing

Miscellanea, fool's gold, bric-a-brac,  
bits and pieces, odds and ends, junk, old rope.  
Boarding passes from times they went for broke.  
Gifts they could never be bothered to wrap.

Ties, from when he tried to make an effort  
and make her proud; and four wax-white earplugs  
in case one snored too loud. Two bashed half-hearts,  
the Valentine that sparked a fight. Clothes pegs.

He, of course, always hated sentiment,  
and she never had much time for times past.  
So the half-full tin of strawberry mints  
must mean a sentry asleep at the post:

how else to explain, sheltered by the brimming chest,  
the shivering sceptic, afraid, at last, of ghosts?