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Pompeian Pottery

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Pompeiiian pottery

Richard S. Spilman

Small shards bound in dirt.
Signs tell us these
are the past's property.

But they're so familiar
we can't resist. They're us
blessed by age and tragedy.

At Laguardia, the agent
sees bits of trash and drops
them among the socks.

We keep them in felt,
take them out to rub
between our fingers.

Charms to ward off
what? We can't say,
but no denying

the comfort they bring,
still slick from use,
jagged at the break.