

Michael Hill

Boats

On the glowing, fold-out screen
of memory's slideshow, my dad
nearly always appears with or within
a boat—a rowboat, a bass boat, even

a canoe: a fleet that launched him
out into the wide channel of his days
and sailed him so swiftly across
an abundance of waterborne years,

only to maroon him in the end—
no boat now, just an empty space
in a drafty garage where a vessel
used to be moored, and a cane

to help him navigate the hard surface
of this strangely solid new world,
one last oar for him to pull on
as he steers for the far shore.