Dream of the Pink and Black Lace,
Just Like the Evening Gown

my favorite in high school,
a dress I'd waited to see
marked down and finally wrote
the store, even then, able
to get what I wanted
more easily on paper. I
told them how often I'd come
back, hoping it would be marked
down and dashed up with my
mother when they agreed
to lower the price.

I feel the swirl of those
gowns I ran my hand through,
terrified mine wouldn't
be there, then carrying it as
carefully as a baby of blown glass.
It was so full my waist
looked tiny inside it
with hoops and a merry widow.
The dress took up half
my mother’s closet,

less space than I did in her,
especially after she had me.
I don’t think I wore it again, too
dressy, too much lace to pack.
But I can see it near the yellow

and the pink and white gauzy gowns,
swirling strapless, a part of 38
Main Street I expected to always
be as it was, like my mother,
waiting for me to fill it

LYN LIFSHIN