

If I'm not careful, it all becomes word

Pam Vap

Poem,
you do
not own me.

Hey, you,
listen up. You
do not own me.

You are
not the sound
of my son's skateboard,
the roll and roll and roll and
pause, and roll again; not the dumb
love song on the radio nor the heavy
memory of my father drunk; not the pink sign
advertising prom manicures nor the news headline:
Thirteen Miners Found Dead; not the chef's thin fingers
nor talcum dust puffed in the air. You are not the mango I had
for breakfast nor the warble of the sandhill crane at dusk, not the
spider I could not bear to kill nor the pull of light through the window.