

Is Anything Better than a 4B Pencil?

It glides and catches in paper's tooth,
deposits graphite, turns
the slightest hint of gray to black sheen,
lightest to darkest depending on pressure,
depending on layers,
depending even on the paper grains—
pocketed deep or glossy and smooth;

a simple tool, it reflects
the object before me, reinvents
the thought working through my mind,
transforms apathy, joy, even grief—fusing them
to the flattened pulp of trees pressed
into possibility,
my feelings
purged, reshaped
through the force

of a single mark.

—V. Bray

