

DEBORAH BURNHAM

Walking into the Water

Two weeks before she did it, I saw her mirror
Bandaged with her best white towel,
Adhesive tape cross-hatched. She hated mirrors.
Kept curtains pinned at night to shut out
Her face staring like a moon from the dark glass.
Her coffee tasted like soap; she'd smeared the kettle
So the bright copper couldn't reflect her face.
I found her in the yard, pounding spoons
Flat and rough. The silver chest was empty—
She'd painted the knives white, stuck forks
In the dirt, tines up like bright weeds.
When she vanished with her car, we knew
Where to look. It was parked neatly by the river
And before she'd walked into the staring water,
Breaking its green reflection with her body,
She'd tied her headscarf on the rearview mirror
And rubbed lipstick on the bright glass of her watch.

