

## Where They Went Wasn't a Place

She put the car in gear  
drove in and out the parking lot with her lights on  
wishing she were that other girl and could feel her insides.  
Or she sometimes jumped up and down yay!  
But that was phony.

Along comes the outside, Norman  
(no relation to Normal).  
Him, she says,  
ya know. How parents swing their eyes at you when you try to leave.  
(What would the other girl have done?)

Monday morning she was in a hurry.  
She stopped and put out her hand and touched the pattern  
in the hallway  
as if a planet rolled at the other end.  
But it's not a planet, it's a kind of fruit.

The pluots had been stepped on  
juice all over, sticky.  
("Don't step.")  
They were wild together, she and Norman  
like spilled chickpeas  
scattering on the kitchen table.  
Everything rolled.  
They longed for something cubelike.  
She bent over to look at the mess, and her pilfered  
Chambord dribbled from the glass onto her flip-flop toes.

He didn't care for the creation.  
Took off her dress and glasses  
but that didn't work.  
Accidents should only happen when you're  
trying to get somewhere.  
He tried, and she ran off and followed after him  
his heart gripping her  
    its little red muscular self  
    but separate from him.  
He didn't know she was behind, had forgotten.  
    No rearview.

Fully clothed now, it was her mind that streaked.  
Astrological formulas spitting out two by two  
divine the wellspring  
the get-there, the track  
Grand Prix.

Racing flags painted on her nails.  
Blue hair  
rolled into two moons on top.

It struck her she'd stopped thinking  
about the other girl, but this itself  
was exactly such a thought oh no.

She wished she were that other girl  
quiet and mutedly dressed  
and talented and hard.



**By a Window in a Darkened Room**

*after Chekhov*

and who is she  
sends my head sprinkling

sound of a kiss  
if lips rustled  
like a dress  
or if water  
a drop or plop  
but a bird's song at night  
doppler

her arms whisper  
shoulders rubbed distinct  
my lips anointed  
as from peppermint

pins of light  
are stuck to the window  
birds kiss out there  
they click and clock

no name  
just a cloud receding

something black flies away in the night air  
dims time

inside the room  
there's no vision  
stars reflected in the kiss  
evaporate

—rustling of a dress  
hurried footsteps—