## 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.

## Shoulder

Family tries young woman who protests manicured entryway. College hats and combs, bun versus free tresses

sprouting.

Wheels of polish, schools want form, student eyes painted or bloodshot. You write their names in French? That is

smart.

Bloodshot eleven o'clock dancing at midnight the boys will call you. If girls feign determination and show up late, it's

money.

You. Your lengthy earrings, figure things out. Dad says nothing. Teachers something. Teachers behind lecture halls bum cigarettes. Have you

the packs?

Brother won't save you.

Look over shoulder. Where
is your money? Kisses
to bloody tongues. Your separation.
You're girl. Girlfriends are hard to find
though everywhere. But family
is in your

face.

Livingroom couch overstuffed. Your form. Not be menace. Or smoke.

## 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—