

The One I Love

Beth Gyls

Is quieter than dust. I haven't
felt his nimble fingers,
bit him on the neck.
He doesn't enter the room,
babbling about the hole in his shoe,
the crazy driver, the kid
who wouldn't move out of the way.
He takes my hand like air;
he touches my stomach like air;
he whispers nothing in my ear
more delicate than a feather.
He hears me sigh
then is instantly behind me,
I'm here; don't worry,
and the words are like
a gaze from my favorite dog.
He looks into my eyes—
all the way through—
and sees whatever hides there:
buildings falling down,
handguns, quicksand.
I love that, he says,
breeze brushing at my cheek.
He never flinches,
never retreats into himself,
puckering like a mushroom.

He likes me always:
as I soak in the bath,
or twitch before sleeping,
wraps me in his arms,
and it feels like summer.
He never breathes loudly in my ear,
never begs: "Please, don't leave me."
I love him as the daylight
holds my window,
the smell of bread
drifts down the placid street.
I tell you, I am lucky.
He lives entirely for me.
But me, I live for no one.

