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Waking

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Waking

I.

I am the woman
in a house with no flowers
who looks in the mirror
and then looks away

I am the woman who crosses her legs
at evening and waits
for the knock on the door,
who picks up a comb
and feels neither the comb
nor her hair;
who waits.

My vocation could be love
or poetry. Once
my fingers sprouted blossoms—
before I fell into this sleep.

My sisters are gone
I sit alone and cannot sing
my legs have lost the rhythm of dance
I wait up late, asleep, awake.

II.

Sometimes
when the man beside me sleeps
my eyes come alive
in the dark room.
I see animals in the corners,
I see the floor stir
like earth moving, and I almost
begin to speak.

Now it is time: Alone I must arise,
lift the floorboards and join them
at the lines of fine, chocolate grain.

I will take the sheets
and make them into sails,
lie down in the warm
brown shadow of the prow,
and stretch softly with one hand
into the blue-purple of sea and air,
toward the green flank
of my old home.

Natania Rosenfeld