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Francesca M. Abbate

April

April. I lie on my back and watch
the girls on the red bicycles
with the red and white baskets
pedal by, their wheels casting
small lights in the grass.
Is it noon yet? There are a few
kites floating at the horizon
between the stone church
and the clock tower. The bench
under the tree is still cold.
If I squint, I can see past the yellow
hills to the blue wall.
I put my hands around my knees
and squeeze until my fingertips meet.
Is the house with the pink
porch swing something I've taught
myself or something I learned?
I don't know how
those girls do it. There's glass
in the air if you go high enough.
It gets hard to breathe. I say the names
of cities to myself while I watch.
In San Francisco the buildings have wrought
iron doors and some of the streets
aren't paved. There are orange trees
in the gardens. My second
wish? Only to go on wanting.
Yesterday a boy in a red hat climbed

the brick wall and laughed
at me because I can't talk. Is the sun
always flashing? I have one wish left.
I roll over on my belly
and pick flecks of grass from my
fingernails. Everything
has a green cast.