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Declaration

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SHANA ROSS

DECLARATION

You can declare bankruptcy—I do it all
the time you just let go of your guilt

like balloon strings, a flash flying
mylar miraculous; let go like peaches

bought last week. Now, before the first
white spot of spoil erupts and declares

no contest. They are already too far gone.
I have spent years and plenty cash money on

therapy so I can tell myself I don't need
to wait for the skin to breach. Save myself

the leaking, the stains on my wicker
fruit basket. I have already decided

I will never answer that email. We watch
Rube Goldberg machines roll slowly

unto completion. I hold my breath hoping
something in motion could escape. Just one

bad bounce. A stroke of luck. Would you
regret grieving now if you got a surprise

reprieve? No. The guilt pipes into the room,
settles heavier than air, an invisible puddle

that displaces all the oxygen
makes it impossible to breathe if

you lie flat on the floor, tears leaking out
the sides and filling your ears. Sometimes

I would stare at a ringing phone, my chest
squeezing the same stuff out of me as I wished

your name would disappear, as I came to terms
with waking, with daylight. That last chance

to talk—shot past and was gone. When the news comes
I nuke my inbox for the third time in sixteen months.