Holding On

Patricia Clark
HOLDING ON

You dreamed of fish with white meat, white teeth, all gnashing: shark, cod, halibut, a sullen dogfish. Your skull throbs from last night’s booze. Flip the switch and face a firing squad of light.

Maybe tomorrow you’ll sleep forever, nestle down into yourself and look for the thing you’ve lost. Under a mound of warm quilt you’re buried in dreams.

Rituals of morning, of rising, of bacon grease snapping at your wrists, warmed-up coffee black as sky. You wish you were tougher, that your face wouldn’t feel walked on. Even the slender lilac makes it through winter. Shiver in morning air as you go out, with empty hands, nothing more sure than a steering wheel to hold onto.