News of You

Sheila Black
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I learn to read you in the oily silence of the lemons, a bowl painted with chrysanthemum; in the autumnal, the girl in a torn coat sitting at the park bench staring at her feet, the sexual cries of the pigeons in the bean tree in my yard—their flapping out at dawn, a flurry of white like exposed thighs. Not to listen for news of you as though you had become a man in a book, forever on page 243—entering a room, softly closing a door. You lift suitcases, pay the check, an anonymous exchange of quarters for coffee, a credit card for a tank of gas. The tightness eases but only in increments. So long I spent snaring the trap—delicate instrument of hair and wing, brightness of blue bead and razor. Now if you
could only see me disassembling it—how I struggle to love the backwards glance, you changed into mere figure—an illustration in my book of illuminations: The boy with the falcon, holding out his thin wrists.