

MARY RUTHERFORD

Blind Spot

Where were you when my mother died on Highway 69?
 Waving traffic past the wreckage in the ditch,
 past the shattered windshield fresh with blood?
 Retching near her bruised and swollen head?
 Or were you skulking there, behind that stand of pines,
 afraid to get involved, you coward you?

Come to think of it, on that second day of March
 in 1992, I didn't hear you shout out *Busy* or *Wrong
 Number* as my office phone rang loud and long.
 That call erased my career, eviscerated my identity.
 You might have yelled out *Fire! Evacuate!*
 created some distraction from the task at hand.
 Your alibi? You were on vacation by the sea,
 perfecting your latest sleight of hand, a full eclipse.

Are you not sovereign over powers of this world?
 You could have starved the aneurysm rooted
 in my sister's brain. Harnessed the lightning
 that zapped her mind, disabled her in her prime.
 Her name alone remained unchanged, the bridge
 between before and after. To what end such waste?
 You however sidestepped questions, accusations,
 conveniently went into estivation.

The hammer that later brutalized my sister, the claw
 that ripped her ear, left it dangling from its lobe,
 the vermin that fled her house, did you lack the will
 to stay the blows, to block the thugs' escape?

Did darkness overcome, evil slug you senseless?
You've had many opportunities to rescue,
to restore. Your score so far, zero, nil. I've been told
to show respect but dammit, I'm fed up with you.
You've one chance left to mend your feckless ways,
show me that I matter, that I am known to you.

I'll be blunt about the challenge. Tomorrow morning
the surgeon will unlock my husband's chest, repair
his failing heart. The surgeon's eyes are quick,
his hands deft, yet still he's fallible. I need your hands
to steady his, your sight to fill that blind spot.
Your eye is on the sparrow, but are you watching us?