

ALISON TOUSTER-REED

Written by a Sinner

I will stop eating. Go, go, take even the apple away.
The clock at six strikes the end of day.

My withered body is a blessing.
I am a fold of light, undressed and dressing.

In the air ahead I fill up the spaces
reserved for my moving to different places.

As a bear shapes itself for hibernation,
I reform myself in order to suffer and burn.

Growing thinner and thinner, I slip my two legs
into jeans, like fitting pegs

into holes made just for them. A part
of me lies between two thinking boards, one brain one heart.

Two people, I am pressed against myself,
pieces of sandpaper on a workman's shelf.

It seems I cannot suffer enough. I arc an archway
with my hands, walk through myself and weigh.

A certain lightness of being, and I am safe.
And In this cool and breathy spring, I will twist and chafe.

I will turn watery as windblown silk, I will faint.
The only way to move is to be a modern saint.