Collage

Put the armless woman here
by the needle. Put the man
by the door that needs paint
with a decorative fan
in his left hand. Assemble
the children in loose formation,
tangled flight pattern
as pans divorce lids,
shoelaces unravel. No one
need speak in this scene—
the row of spindles
says it all. Glue the window
to the floor. It’s best to watch
a thing approach
from beneath—a shadow, a curl
of smoke. Paste some curtains
to the wall, then flames
to the curtains. These are not
the kind that burn. Where
is the woman again? Look—
she’s been fastened near the light
too long. Her features
tend ghostward, a blue dress  
considers the notion of gray.  

So she is faded, yes.  
So she has perfected the art  

of trimming. This floor plan  
ever worked. This is what sent her  

to her desk, reaching  
for scissors, glue, something  

to arrange. So evening comes,  
the waiting for sleep.  

The *snip, snip, snip*  
of her blades.
ABOUT MOLLY SPENCER

Molly Spencer’s work has previously appeared in Beloit Poetry Journal, Escape Into Life, Linebreak, The Massachusetts Review, and THRUSH Poetry Journal. She has taught poetry to elementary students, is training to be a teaching poet with California Poets in the Schools, and will be pursuing an MFA through Pacific Lutheran University’s Rainier Writing Workshop. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and blogs at the stanza: a little room for poetry and the writing life (mollyspencer.wordpress.com).