

MOLLY SPENCER

At Forty I Remember Her

*And wandering, childlike, through the orchard trees
From a low branch had picked a pomegranate
And peeled the yellow rind and found the seeds
And nibbled
Ovid*

Unframed, the faded years and windows of a house.
Its rooms soundless now. The standstill scent,
the stalled kitchen, those long ago days of fruit.

And me, the rewind unclenching of years
between now and the usual miracle of roof
and wall, angled lines between girl and storm.

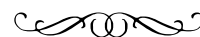
That lightning night waking to the rush and crack
of oaks against storm-wind, drugged scent of rain,
the house itself uncertain of hillside. Then morning

collaged with birdsong scraps
of tree and orchard, bruised blooms
and sunlight, blank linens on the line.

And now my face an atlas of years
and small wars, framed by a far-gone window.
Half-seen ribbon of girl just now slipped

out of me, braided and barefoot. The sky made low
with winter, waiting. And her at the table, hungry.
A hot bouquet of berries on a plate

and the girl, yes, and opening her mouth to eat.



ABOUT MOLLY SPENCER



Molly Spencer's poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Cave Wall*, *Linebreak*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and elsewhere. A native Michigander and erstwhile Minnesotan, she now lives in the San Francisco Bay area with her husband and their three children. She writes about poetry, the writing life, and parenthood at mollyspencer.wordpress.com/.

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The epigraph for "At Forty I Remember Her" is taken from the story of the abduction of Proserpine in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Translated by A. D. Melville. Oxford University Press (1987), p. 115.

