

KATHERINE SMITH

Demeter

Since looking has taken the place of thinking,
she's tempted to jettison the poetry.
She sweeps Helen Vendler and Susan Sontag
into a cardboard box. So many glass baubles
she can't bring herself to throw away. She
carries the books to the basement, clearing
the house before putting it up for sale. Then
she carries the pine bookshelves, lighter
than she remembers, down the stairs.
The living room looks brighter,
shorn of books, like a lamb. On the coffee table
she throws down fistfuls of paint chips
for the new house. How slow the mind moves
at times, a procession formal as tragedy,
she says to no one, fanning the shades
of apricot on the table like a deck of cards,
closing her eyes to choose the color for the new
living room, placing her fingertip on the palest,
almost white, tint of pink, the color
of her daughter's winter pale flesh.