

JENNIFER GIVHAN

## Reabsorption Elegy

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Daughter, I won't make milk for you anymore.  
The body retreats. It reclaims

miracles. My smaller-now breasts, whitish,  
shining as with sickness, the way the body

releases its heat, a light summer dress, floating  
in the river while the pregnancy

strips, the twenty in Ziploc freezer bags,  
their lines fading equal signs or crosses,

proof like La Virgen in her robes, stains  
that didn't freeze or scrape, barnacle-

calcifying silence. Some things the body  
reabsorbs—split wood, fingernails, trauma,

milk. Some things it lets go, bundles of cells  
that won't grow. But not you, little girl. You clung

& I clung back. I used to trick myself  
years before you, believing my breasts were sore

but not from pinching. If I squeezed long enough,  
a sticky clear stream would ooze from one side.

Look what the body can do—  
it can lie. I can lie, too. *I'm choosing this.*

The truth can wrap itself in cabbage leaves, or wait  
for the body to reabsorb.

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