

“The New Year”

This is the year you cannot reason with
or pull close like a lover.

This is the year you break off
like a chunk of bread, all your charms
are useless here-black leather jacket,
dark glasses, fine boots—
and the saddle blanket you brought
to hang on the wall thinking
to retain the spirit of its maker.

This is the year of the body
restless, through nights of books
and self-recrimination. Not the body
of a young woman, but a woman
in the middle of her life, agitated,
shaking the chemicals in the beaker
to understand the mix, to find a use
for the precipitate.

This year the familiar vignettes
don't do the trick: horses pastured
on clear-cut fields, photographs of the high places
you climbed with friends, summer
houses against blue water.

Now you surrender
the pleasure of description, the known
subject, the religion of closure,
a soldier who puts down her weapons
and disarms in fear
straining to catch the rumors
of new borders and undefended life.