

“The Coat”

After so many years,
standing with me in the same mirror,
it is almost transparent.
In the morning I rise up and enter it—
this skin frayed at the wristbones; this suitcase
of old weathers, slick with shine, sagging
with the weight of inner pockets.

At night I slide it off, and the darkness
slides into it, slips its fingers inside
and touches what the day has left—
old bills, dry webs of hair, salt,
a leaf thin and sharp as a bird's thigh.
What do I care what the dark does,
rifling my coat like an old wife?

Throw it on a stool to beg,
dance with it the long nights,
fold it after the funeral—what do I care?
When I lie down naked to sleep
it wears my own slouch.
I breathe in. Breathe out.
In a dark corner, it fills.