

## residue

not all the rosewater of lebanon  
can sweeten this little hand - she,  
sickly medicated & useless  
farts in the bathwater now & cries

into it, too, salty warm tears that  
slip out stupidly & fall in while  
the kitten peers interestedly over  
the edge, & her naked breasts

& stomach turn cold. any old path  
back to herself is choked &  
littered with absent men, fallen-timbered  
corpses she must step over, hack

through - the last one marks  
every black-numbered page of her  
dead calender, the other sends blank  
letters to commemorate lost

poets, vivid once like herself. today  
tired & flabbergasted in the concrete-  
block bureaucracy office of gray case  
workers & no psychiatrists, there

is no point finishing even this line -  
or this - why does it go on and take  
so long, why so many names to burn  
her fingers when she tries to pick up

the heavy pen, so many midnights to  
sink their small fangs throughly into the  
meat of her palm, the web between  
thumb & forefinger that was

surely meant, in someone else's  
story, to be the pinion of a wing.