

Traveller's Attack

Still all women starkers on his mind
but on his knees and petrified.
Watercress overflows as his briefcase
breaks open on the pavement. Hear
the stone tablets swear at him.

With his heart the organ most fallible—
concrete to his loved ones and
and now regressed to churning gravel—
his mind's eye refuses to unfocus,
women pass him in a haze of dust.

The street smells of burnt rubber.
His hand grasps the cold comfort
of spilled watercress. From ambulance
to hospital and flexible attachments,
and only women doctors on, by accident.

All women clad in white, hands in gloves
and stonily smiling. Stark. Their eyes
intent on the waves of his screen.
"Those sirens on the rocks," he pants,
"it was all in Odysseus' mind."

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