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The Lady Flower; How lovely this deaf woman's ear

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The lady flower

After a shower
a lady flower bends
bearing droplets

like the postbath
hair-toss of Degas' women,
revealing shoulders. Everything of her

is slender; even to fingers passed
long down her neck
as she closes

in a modesty of rain

How lovely this deaf woman's ear

How lovely this deaf woman's ear,
white scallop like classical marble made
and eased closed by a master's thumb,
jealous of sound.

The lift of her head when I speak
as if words
like pasty water in the sculptor's
bowl might drop
and fill
making substance —

the quick of her barefoot walk
on carpets, the felt skirt
she firms in her lap. She has heard
with my eyes,
drawing close
that our mouths may share speech.