

Migration Instinct
for Becky

Today the wife of the last man who made me lonely
is having a baby. Oh, October: we all want
to get up and leave, crawl out of our flesh sacks and fly
like mad. Back when I was someone else this would have been
a day for wallowing, for bumming a cigarette
off some hot, filthy man and downing gin at noon. I'd
have basted my eyelids with green shadow, tossed less-than-
delicate looks across the room at strangers still full
of all the sweet possibility I could muster—
something to drive the low growl of nostalgia away.
It would have been a tear-down-the-street-blowing-stop-signs
day, a roll-down-the-windows-full-volume afternoon.
But I've got diapers to wash, tiny sock-after-sock
to fold. The greatest sin I'm allowed is a sip of
coffee. Sadness is so much work. Angry takes too much
time. And there's my own daughter, winking in the lamp light,
her mouth to my breast, sucking it all right out of me.

Told You So

When my daughter spills her orange juice, I wipe it off the linoleum
with the old plaid boxers of the man I thought I'd marry.
Elastic ripped out, seams unraveling—I've had lives
already. At night they crawl across

my skin before I can turn on the light.
We spend all these years wanting, and then one day—sudden
as a lamp set to a timer—we have.

There were the nights I drank just so I could feel a little
more of my own unhappiness. Now, with my feet pressed
into this rug, I'll never be that drunk again.

Before I went to the clinic to get pregnant, I cried onto the shoulder
of an old flame, worried that whoever I loved next would never know
my body when it was beautiful.

How could I have been wrong about so many things?