

The Holy Ghost in Melpomene's Closet

Elizabeth Garcia

Of bodies chang'd to various forms, I sing.

—*Ovid*

Before the black suits,
before the string of pearls
you will be in your bedroom slippers, steel woolling the pans.
Your coveralls, your boots, mucking out stalls.
Your garden gloves, your favorite shirt shrunk from the dryer,
too tight or short to wear in public.

And later, after the cards, the wilted flowers,
the casserole dishes returned somehow,
and the chainsaw of your anger has dimmed
to a distant hum,
when the roots of your hair
are clinging to your scalp in swirls,
I will come to you then,
I will gather you, like Orpheus,
piece by piece, the joints and sinew,
the shoulder, the back, a knee, a knee,
all the bricks of your body, the cast iron
of your guilt, until you are the empty boneyard,
furrowed and dry, ready for rain.