PERENNIAL SNOW ON THE MOUNTAIN,
dragon's blood sedum, fever dew.
They are doing what
their kind do: crying,
Enter me I don't care.
As if the world turns
its lips around them
just as some of us will do
for some others. He's rich,
the man who watches the woman
raking around a plaster chicken. And
the woman, they say, is not quite
right. Making a plaster chicken at home
is all it looks like to him.

In the morning the mist appears to break
the garden's ornamental bridge
as if someone cannot walk back
that way again.

In the stories of childhood,
those that make us happy,
someone is always caught
for good. She can't go back either.
That's justice: Someone else says
No. The world won't love you enough.
We might believe all this
but there is so much tenderness
in even that woman
raking around a chicken.

When the man slides open the glass
doors, he walks to her. They stand quietly
as if waiting
for a story some flowers might tell
when they are very tired and about
to blow over the lawn.
Some of them believe there is
no snow and that it is a burden
only they can bear — to be beautiful.
For others, they do what they can:
The woman's hand is muscular and moving,
and the man, he has, he has
some lovely spotted money he waves
into all that racket
inside the woman's head.