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For Elizabeth: Who Comes Home from School and Falls Down, Crying

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For Elizabeth

who comes home from school
and falls down, crying

Yesterday you exploded over dinner,
yanking my arm, screaming down, down.

and when I asked where you wanted to go
you said, home, home, waving a little hand

at the front door—
so another tiny room unlocked, snick.

in my chest, and a crucial piece of me
fell out.

Every day this happens.
Every day you let me know how I've betrayed you.

reminding me that we are two, not one.
burning—often—like old and new stars

flung far from each other's orbits.
You see, darling.

you fall down only to fly up.
and blow apart so that you can be filled again,

waking, with the recreated world.
But it seems that I get up only to fall down,

that I try to fill myself with you, every day,
but you open the doors and run through them,

screaming,
mad with joy.

Laurie MacDiarmid, Visiting Assistant Professor in English, will be moving to St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin, to take a tenure-track position as Writer in Residence. These poems are from In the Moon Palace with Daddy Roy, a book she hopes to publish soon.