

Taylor Graham

Haircut

I sit on the kitchen stool
while you cut my hair.
Dull as dishwater, it
trickles from my shoulders
onto the tile floor.
This morning I chipped a tooth.
Mortal tic in the enamel,
thirty-two chances at decay.
Toenails go on growing,
they say, in the grave.

Hair out of control,
at night I'd twist my brain
against the pillow, dreams
metastasizing. You've cut it
back. But still I feel it
reaching in all directions –
tendrils tuned earthward
to the worms, wires on-end,
tiny antennae for
messages from out there.

Taylor Graham is a volunteer search-and-rescue dog handler in the Sierra Nevada, and also helps her husband (a retired wildlife biologist) with his field projects. Her poems have appeared in *International Poetry Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *Poetry International*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and elsewhere, and she is included in the anthology, *California Poetry: From the Gold Rush to the Present* (Santa Clara University, 2004). Taylor's book *The Downstairs Dance Floor* (Texas Review Press, 2006) was awarded the Robert Phillips Poetry Chapbook Prize.