

Katherine Szpekman

Late for Basketball Practice

There you stand on the driveway
in your white socks, holding your sneakers
looking at me

like you don't know who I am
or why I am shouting to you
hurry up my boy, now almost a man.

I watch you put it together
like Lego blocks –
grab water bottle, get shoes on, get in car,

and I remember the smell
of your downy head,
the tingle and swell of milk

as we rode the waves,
in the green rocking chair,
held in a warm ocean of darkness.

You hop in, on long legs of muscle and fur,
slam the door a little too hard, as always.
This time, I don't correct.

You caress the orange globe in your lap,
fingertips read its pebbled surface,
palms slide over black lines of longitude.

Your scent is salty and mossy,
like seaweed and wet leaves in fall.
You have joined a new tribe.

Sweat beads on your forehead,
whiskers have sprouted on your face,
and your jaw sits sculpted and determined.

We drive in silence,
like passengers on a bus
getting off at different stops.

The day's last brush strokes sweep
pink and scarlet, orange and gold.
Twilight is but moments away.

Katherine Szpekman writes poetry and memoir from her home in Collinsville, Connecticut, where she lives with her husband, two cats and a golden retriever. She has raised three children to various stages of separation and adulthood. She finds inspiration in the everyday and nature. Loss, family, and place are central in her poetry. Her work has appeared in *Red Eft Review* and is forthcoming in *Sky Island Journal*.