

The Fall

I remember my mother
fallen there in the darkest
reaches of the corridor.

Her plangent crying, so like a wounded animal,
tousled mass of curled hair spilling
across the floor boards in a slit of light.

She was sobbing into the crook of her arm,
clutching an ankle, writhing with a pain
I could not decipher.

I tried to pat her, to tidy the damp strands
of hair stuck to her face, but she wailed
and growled and shrank from my touch.

I could not comfort her, so I just stood there—
clutching the bunched hem of my dress
like an unlaid wreath.

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