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Faint April light,
the stout woman on the porch
squinting behind plastic-framed glasses
looks out at a dazzle of white tutus pirouetting
upon the Norway maple and imagines
not the genesis of leaves but bad weather
stacking in her knees.

She scowls at the mailman
plodding across lawns, hauling bills
and solicitations. A bell rings in the blank house
behind her. She turns to answer, expecting bad news
or an aggravation of sellers.

What she needs cannot be purchased or remembered
except in dreams, lying in a cluster of sheets
in the lost body of girlhood, eyes clenched upon departures,
sleight-of-hand hummingbirds, immaculate magnolias
unfolding on leafless limbs.

She is trapped in solids,
spatula of light, the cheap grainy platter of the sky.
Grumpy, thick-armed, she faces each foreboding day
squarely with her door framing a darkness big enough
to shut over her body.