

## OUT TO DINNER WITH MY HUSBAND FROM WHOM I AM SEPARATED •

Emily Hyland

Every time we dine together now,  
we dress up like readying

to renew our vows. My normal hum:  
barefooted, home, in a holey and oversoft sweater,

but I take time to dislocate a dress  
from the back, deep closet socket;

I pull apart and poke contacts  
into my eyes so that glasses become

lesser a shield between us; I paint  
my features that I've never felt like painting.

I blend and I brush the gray dust and the other  
lighter gray dust—this chroma of dyes,

gloss on the sticky, viscid pinkish goo  
while I think of you, readying too.

And we meet at some fancy city spot  
set aside for seminal nights in other lives—

anniversaries and birthdays alight,  
but for us what's become

another Tuesday—a place to look across a schism  
of starched napery and toile of countless threads—

to watch a taper candle flicker and dribble  
in the dread of its own knowing and avowal—

our conversation, testimony to a wanting  
to not be like the candle,

but to be all the parts of the rabbit  
gutted and cooked, unrecognizable

as a creature perhaps anymore  
yet so fucking delicious in its sauce;

we slide our fingers around the sides  
of our plates like animals

to reach through the thicket and grove  
of tableware and tulips of wine:

russet, burgundy, blush—into the wellspring  
where space has been cleared for our marriage

and lick the flavor off of each other's fingers,  
wanton and wayward, yet still not able

for our hands to hold upon leaving  
or to return to a common home to disrobe

and eat more carnally in love, just now to know  
we can share a car back over the bridge

wherein you will get out first  
and I will continue on,

unable to touch  
what is aching.