“The New Year”

This is the year you cannot reason with or pull close like a lover. This is the year you break off like a chunk of bread, all your charms are useless here-black leather jacket, dark glasses, fine boots—and the saddle blanket you brought to hang on the wall thinking to retain the spirit of its maker. This is the year of the body restless, through nights of books and self-recrimination. Not the body of a young woman, but a woman in the middle of her life, agitated, shaking the chemicals in the beaker to understand the mix, to find a use for the precipitate. This year the familiar vignettes don't do the trick: horses pastured on clear-cut fields, photographs of the high places you climbed with friends, summer houses against blue water. Now you surrender the pleasure of description, the known subject, the religion of closure, a soldier who puts down her weapons and disarms in fear straining to catch the rumors of new borders and undefended life.