A BATHING GOWN A GIRL CAN MAKE

A girl usually wears a costume. Plain blue is suitable for tightly clinging knickers fastened on by buttons. The part not shown in the picture slips in and out of the front, which is slit. White bone buttons are made firm to cut up the legs. If it is inconvenient to machine the knickers, stitch for an inch or two in position. If the girl understands anything, it will not do to make the costume an ample room.
THE ONLY HOUSE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The stove doesn’t work. The food is painted on the refrigerator door. No stairs join

the three levels, and the residents flit between them: colorful, mute birds. Days

pass with the click of a switch and no matter if Baby bathes with his clothes on, or Mother

in her fitted purple jacket, heeled shoes, and with her wild silken hair spends a week

facedown on the laundry room floor, or if when Father goes to work he is really only

waiting behind the sunroom to come back home. There is a birthday party nearly every day,

no fear of death or failure, no mortgage to pay, no money at all. And if the tiny pink

phone in the kitchen never rings, and the doors don’t open, and if the family can’t bend

their knees to kneel in the warm square of light on the plastic-wood floor, they still lie

ready for you to set the table, snap the garden fence back into place, position the pink crib

next to the blue, fix the girl onto her rocking horse, and let your hand push the thing until it topples.
THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED

Sun silences the house. Between bough and twig, a splintered branch. Mother stands behind the wall. It is miniature: the baby's coffin floating rooms like a canoe at dawn, smudging wood floors like water. I want so much to see his face, eyelids blue and shining under lamplight, but he is wordless, invisible. We paint Easter eggs for him, the prince in the moving tomb, and find them in the grass all blue and spotted, slick with baby slugs. Before the service, I refuse to wear my dress. Want to look older for the limo ride. Mother is a silhouette coming downstairs.

The women have eaten fruit and drunk their coffee. The sun rises over the lawn where forgotten eggs hide. The Lord is risen indeed.

Lilies light the way to the humming car, full of believers. I sit to the right of my father. My cousin’s dress is too big for me.
SISTERS

the duckling in the shoebox dying fluttered fast
its leaves and twigs I am green
transparent sister told my sister her legs are not
gorgeous crawling to the bathroom
said you both like that anorexic look but not me
on TV a wrestling match the mean
woman in leather tore up the drawing from that retard
who loved her once I pissed my pants
laughed too hard sat in the driveway for an hour
on the bus the drunk girl cried
I’ve just been through hell I’m supposed to be
a bridesmaid where is my dress
I’ve lost the two people the African Gray in summer
flew up into the trees from my father’s
shoulder where are the two people that I love?