

Still blocks away when it began to pour
at dusk, my fingers pressed
thighs through a crimson
hand-me-down sewn back countless
times, first by grandmother
then me, its white, curling vines
of miniature buds or elaborate hearts
ripping at the seams. She
wore it with stockings,
pumps, pearls; I wore it
barefoot in my twenties, a strand of worn
leather doubled at my wrist. As it came down
hard, I knew Marion's dress couldn't take
the weight of rain
and I couldn't
let her go, having kept her
here, sewing back the last
fabric of her days. Her being
made a body that made
this body that wore
her dress this last
day walking back. Under
a streetlamp by her apple green
house, I stood until
her dress began to peel from
me. Two hands
clutching at seams, fists
tight on her memory,
her world fell away—
and I let it.