

## Milkweed for the Bedwetting Child

woke to skunk air    frayed rope of thighs  
a fact fattening in your ten-year-old    fist  
stepmom in her Similac cloud winter slippers    silence  
hovering over stove oatmeal & infant bottles  
you'd have to say her name    say the sentence  
under her rules you asked to be excused didn't  
say god or touch she put plastic covers on your    secondhand  
mattress    something to sound as you tried  
to sleep    a sloughing to remind you    *lost*  
was your mother's word & *take* as in *you took*  
*my kids away* as in *they'll take you away*  
you planned on screaming if a cop ever tried it  
a good daughter would scream    a daughter    pure & properly  
tethered to her mother but you were learning  
how to turn to pond water    how to frill urges  
with tadpoles    knot their tails in a collar    tight to the throat  
so when your dad picked you up & took you  
crying wouldn't come    you imagined music  
from *Heidi* her alpine train & its pulling away  
stepmom said Look at me    why are you hiding    that shame garment  
said    big girls don't do that    *big girl big girl*  
a best dress stripped off in front of everyone