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Once

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Once.

I wanted a little house near waves;
to walk barefoot on wooden floors
in blue dresses.

I'd arrange simple flowers from your garden,
then wrap my hair in torn sheets.

Brown babies swing in swings
swing in swings . . .
the moon's pull takes away from me.

I cry two cups each day
and add them to your pancakes,
stand in front of the coffee until
my head cracks and quicksilver
drops out,
mercury
hitting the floor, now
a thousand pieces
rolling
flashing
into dusky corners,
gleaming in straight lines
between the polished boards.

Kate Silliman

"Mute"

It's winter
and that's such a helpless season
Why won't you listen to me
As we walk down concrete steps
Long and jagged
Edged by yellow grass, ice-jeweled.

Robert Youngblood