

The Switch

Someone loves the man who comes to my house
to lay wire. Someone loves the man who pours the concrete,
the one who tears up the shingles, the one who puts in
the studs. Someone loves the man who unrolls
the carpet. I know, because once

I kissed your smooth cheek in the morning
and watched you dress—denim shirt, jeans,
work boots, and a belt heavy with tools.
After you were gone I made coffee, made
the bed, made myself think of something—anything—
besides the heights where you worked, the hot wires
your fingers touched and how I loved those fingers,
the thick palms, the white crescents of your nails.

One day you threw a switch that almost killed you:
sparks, fire, burns that covered your hands and face.
It was before we met, but I saved the story,
took it out in the morning after you'd gone,
recited it like a rosary. I knew I could love you
into safety, pray your world right, smooth your life
like a bead between my fingers.

This morning I say the story again and wonder where you are,
which wires you are touching. Wonder who watches you dress,
who prays over your scars.

And wonder as I pour another cup of coffee just who loves
the man snaking wire from my attic to the basement.
I wonder who is praying for him as, right now,
he is throwing the switch.