**Elegy for Broken Girls**

Haley Marks

you said you could feel parts of you dying

the fates, pulling your thread taut for cutting

playing cat’s cradle with your life. no more

permanent than a handprint on fogged glass.

i laughed, tasting the petals of peonies. told

you that a loose cog in your ankle didn’t

mean death, in his overcoat, was sipping coffee

on our front porch. at nineteen, we gargled

witty remarks, back throat burning, impervious,

untouchable. the skin of the world made

way for us, taken by teeth and long nails.

i didn’t understand until i saw the plum

thumbprints branding your inner thigh; you

bearing your guts like roadkill to strange men

you met on the internet. at nineteen, you thought

suffering was an artform. i gathered your parts

an eye, a pulse, a limb; you fractured into light.