**Habits**

Shannon Marzella

**(I repeat)**

my knife is sharpened

by the raw edge

of this mountain, and it digs

into the soft part of

my back when

I keep it pocketed.

**(I repeat)**

my knife is an instrument

of decay. I use it

to decimate apples

into tiny, bite-size

pieces only to be distributed

into the compost of your body.

**(I repeat)**

dinner is served

on a neat table

and I’ve swept the crumbs

and resulting refuse

into the sadness

of a black can.

**(I repeat)**

my knife is a carver

of wood, and apples, and

time. It knows my habits,

the way I like to be held,

the way I turn toward its

precious heaviness.

**(I repeat)**

you’ve asked and asked,

and I’ve relented. Yes–

my knife is a mother, you may

see her teeth, run your fingers along her spine,

take pleasure in her heft as you run her smoothly

through the ripeness of late summer flesh.