**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.