

Whore

What kind of mother calls her daughter “whore”
when she finds out her daughter’s fiancé
is moving in a couple months before

the wedding? Small-town priggish to her core,
smug priest who slams shut the confessional grate:
that kind of mother calls her daughter “whore.”

Yet, when that husband battered down a door,
came crashing through a bookshelf barricade,
the daughter phoned her mother just before,

instead of the police, or friends. What for?
The mother snapped, “Oh, don’t exaggerate.”
The phone line crackled with the unsaid “whore.”

The daughter crumbled after the divorce.
She slept around as if each drunken lay
could blot out all the ugliness before:

so many men that she could not keep score.
They cradled her, if only till they came.
Once you have heard your mother call you “whore,”
you might as well be, if you weren’t before.

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