

# Benign

you were there when I reached up  
into the shower's steam  
nestling into my body's secret place  
I could not have kept you safer  
if you had been the daughter  
I never had

I sob with joy to find  
a new friend so late in life  
to be able to caress you  
imagine all the promises  
I put into your non-existent  
mouth

to spare me from pain  
decay and becoming  
someone who is not me  
to ease my guilt as the world  
burns starves or ends with  
a bang

to keep me from the bleeding  
to death of a reason  
for living one friend  
at a time from forgetting  
or being forgotten by her  
I love

lump  
hard centred and red rimmed  
in your sheltered forest  
of hair when I reached  
for you again I found only  
clear skin