

folding linen at the lodge

take one flat sheet
heavily starched
penetecostal white
fold it quietly behind closed doors
smiling

lest your husband walks in
maintain your grace at all times
(skirt well below the knees)
whilst you tame the corners
of four-figure thread counts

he must never know of
creases in your thoughts
threadbare patches
of independence
where you wonder at women
in other dimensions
met daily with bullet or burden
women with starch in their backbone
women who tear sheets
for bandages and swaddling cloths

how you long to be that woman
who doesn't go to garden parties
refuses to speak
in a sponge cake voice
who cares little for pillow slips
hand-embroidered with sweet
pea and damask rose— that woman
who dares leave laundry and kitchen
who will not be forced to smile
who will never be shouted down