

Sophia Canavos

I had to hold her.
She was crying, after all.
This is all about
me. I had to
hold her. My mother
after, or before all
the beatings, she cried
like an abandoned child
so I held her.
Her father
“touched her”
and when she wasn’t
angry, finding a reason
to hit me,
she cried.
“He touched me
and my mother
didn’t believe me.”
This is mostly about
me. How I held her,
because she wasn’t
the monster who
hit me, when
she cried. She
was a little girl,
younger than me
at II.
I held her, too,
when she woke

during those bad
dreams. I wouldn't
have cared, if she only
hit me, but
she also cried,
so I held her.

I miss the
shine and curl
of yellow birch bark
in the dank wood
and hills
to conceal
and reveal
at unexpected
intervals
I don't want
to see all
all-at-once
I miss
resilient
sodden moss
underfoot
and jumping
noisy rivulets
though my shoes
are soaked through
and the warblers
so briefly
visible
once the endless
trees have
leafed-out
the bitter
scent of ferns
and scaring up
a chain of
bobolinks
hidden in the
field
their hollow calls
echoing
yellow napes
flared

Melville's Post

As you stood your watch
the masthead, a dreaming
perch, for an unsuitable
scout
lulled by the
trade winds
healed of doubt
Did you lose
yourself
in those
endless waves?
Reserve
some small segment
for fear?
Love the deceiver
beautiful
though she is
imagined union
with her mirage
You must have
held fast, though
in the moment
before
watching death
approach through
your reverie
awoke, at last
you call out
and remember
there is danger
here, too
so high
and removed
Perhaps entering
the sea
provides greater
reward
perhaps living
is possible
immersed