

## To a Friend Going Blind · Jorie Graham

Today, because I couldn't find the shortcut through,  
I had to walk this town's entire inner  
perimeter to find  
where the medieval walls break open  
in an eighteenth century  
arch. The yellow valley flickered on and off  
through cracks and the gaps  
for guns. Bruna is teaching me  
to cut a pattern.  
Saturdays we buy the cloth.  
She takes it in her hands  
like a good idea, feeling  
for texture, grain, the built-in  
limits. It's only as an afterthought she asks  
*and do you think it's beautiful?*  
Her measuring tapes hang down, corn-blond and endless,  
from her neck.  
When I look at her  
I think *Rapunzel*,  
how one could climb that measuring,  
that love. But I was saying,  
I wandered all along the street that hugs the walls,  
a needle floating  
on its cloth. Once  
I shut my eyes and felt my way  
along the stone. Outside  
is the cash crop, sunflowers, as far as one can see. Listen,  
the wind rattles in them,  
a loose worship  
seeking an object  
an interruption. Sara,  
the walls are beautiful. They block the view.  
And it feels rich to be  
inside their grasp.

When Bruna finishes her dress  
it is the shape of what has come  
to rescue her. She puts it on.