Passage · *Marianne Boruch*

I took the old man in me
& went to the river.
Get out, I said
opening my coat
to tree & air & ice.
Get out, I said. This is it.

He would not look at me.
Blunt feather
as he moved, light
winnowed him, dark trace
spine & rib.
I thought: you sullen bird
you fish. I imagined his blue eyes, hook
simple, hard as dice. I swore
above the glare: teach me now, bastard.
                          Thin pajamas, stepping
into wind.

I buttoned my coat
as he walked toward the water.
For a moment, his hair
flashed
impossibly white. I thought of river filth
his numb, pale weight
                          dropping into the cold jaw.
I opened my mouth: *nothing nothing*