

Beckian Fritz Goldberg

WASHED IN THE RIVER

Of course the woman with the mouse-child was famous,
as grace is famous
a rarity

at the end of suffering. She kept him in
a nest in the dry bathtub
and washed in the river.

And though only children were meant
to believe this, I still believe this.
The fate of the body
is to confound

itself with everything. That's why
in another tale, the fair sister
opened her mouth and spoke
rubies

and the plain sister, vipers and toads.
Meanwhile the mother

of the gray thing
bathed him in a teacup.
Plucked him out and let him
run along the shore

to the window. Where both of them
were struck in longing—
he behind the great glass,
she behind the gray boy.

The second you see yourself in the suffering
the story's over.