

# My Hair Burned Like Berenice

by Ruth Awad

And after nailed upon the night  
Berenice's burning hair.  
—W.B. Yeats, "Her Dream"

Days of rain. The drey outside my window would keel  
and the wind would plunder. My heart was valent  
with possibility: I could be anyone now, half woman,  
half asterism. Fragmental as a new year. Patron saint  
of the rutilant and cindering. I could rove incognito  
to places pinned in office calendars. Too long I'd  
mothered myself with the admiration of onlookers.  
I was grateful to be alone in my abstraction. To be both  
ignored and abraded by a coarse sky. I did not offer up  
parts of me like kindling. I will not embellish a single  
hemisphere. The ground bulges with a wet sound.  
It is gluttoned with what was given. I do the wolfish work  
of god and make myself again. Ripen like lichen on  
the pavement. Like rain carrying the memory of lightning.