

In the ghost hours

my mother strews seed pods
that cling to me with black threads.

She stoops in a field of whirling seagulls,
raking the sleepless.

She's the woman who knocks three times
foretelling another departure,

or presides at the crossroads,
pointing four ways.

Sometimes she hovers in another room,
the door wide—

her face either toward or from me.

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Last night, I dreamt you were making love
with another, using all the words you used with me.

Now I am in the dark, putting on skirt after skirt,
trying to find the one I left home with.

My mother laughs.

Theresa McCourt