

Domestic

She is not pretty.
Her face was never made for your applications of color
swept over cheek and brow to sweep under
what you found unacceptable.

She has never fit
in damask; she was made for denim.
Her lines are tuxedo; her stride too cocky
to be constrained by skirt, slip, or stocking.

She is herself.
Sane in her sturdy body, she dances dinner onto your table.
She whispers a ribald joke to the appetizers,
murmurs a prayer into the ears of the salad greens.

You do not see
how your daughter's square hands make barbeque tongs croon,
how in her presence wine laughs itself into your glass,
how your sweater transforms to a toreador's cape as she swirls it over your shoulders.

You say:
My Gad—people will say Dyke-Dyke-Dyke!
when she shows you thick soles and black leather;
motorcycle boots proclaiming her true north.

I watch her smile drain
back into the black leech fields of childhood.
Watch the drear and careful mask reappear to cloak her goddess face.

I will burn this house to the ground.