LOUISE GLÜCK

THE MURDERESS

You call me sane, insane—I tell you men
were leering to themselves; she saw.
She was my daughter. She would pare
her skirt until her thighs grew
longer, till the split tongue slid into her brain.
He had her smell. Fear
will check beauty, but she had no fear. She talked
doubletalk, she lent
her heat to Hell’s: Commissioner, the sun
opens to consume the Virgin on the fifteenth day.
It was like slitting fish. And then the stain
dissolved, and God presided at her body.