

DEBORAH SCHWARTZ

Pearl Bird

for Dorothea Lasky

We've all had the experience of looking across the bathtub
and feeling like your toes belong to someone else.
Even though I have the hiccups,
It's you in the window waiting for me.

I came from the small shtetl of my mother's tongue
and now am wearing this green dress.
I like the block flower print, the black against the green,
the gold of the snow, the pearl bird.

I could teach the dead something.
They sure have taught me a lot.
I taught a mother something once.
It had to do with remembering what it's like to be a daughter.
That's what the dead have taught me.
That and that there's a god that though made us in his own image,
is too shy to talk to us.