ing my daughter's hair and letting it hang loose instead of braiding it as I do; dreams of her bathing my child, soaping her back, her chest with those narrow hands...

It became difficult to fall asleep. My husband didn't share my concern. I tried to warn some of the other parents, talked to the principal. No one listened. The pictures in our house remained unstraightened; my onyx elephants turned dull with dust. October came, but I did not care to replace the light bulbs as always on the first of each month.

I began to bring a book or a magazine to school. Sitting in the car after Andrea went inside, I waited for the woman to leave so I could follow and see where she lived. But she always stayed motionless until that morning when she looked at my daughter as we walked past her, and her lips drew apart in the familiar smile of my dreams. Andrea raised her hand and smiled back. My legs felt heavy when I went back to the car. I picked up the book I'd brought but couldn't follow the words. I closed it and laid it on the passenger seat, tracing the letters on the dust jacket with one finger.

That's when she made her move. Ever so slowly she walked away from the building, her pale eyes on me through the windows of the car, closer, until I felt my fingers twist the key in the ignition, closer, passing in front of my car, her face turned toward me through the windshield, until I had pressed my foot against the accelerator and felt the car lurch forward, until I had pressed my hand on the horn and the woman ran away.

The accidents in our town have stopped. But nobody has come to thank me. Only my husband visits me on Sunday afternoons and talks about things that don't matter in a hushed voice one brings to sickbeds. He won't bring Andrea; he says it would upset her. It won't be long until I can leave. I don't mind the wait. Our town is safe again and here it is quiet. Winter quiet. The walls of my room are white and bare; the mattress on my bed is firm. Every other day a tall doctor with glasses comes to talk with me. He doesn't ask me anymore why I did it. He doesn't need to-he knows all about bad luck and that one has to set an end to it.

Last summer several accidents happened in our town: an infant was forgotten on the roof of...

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Excerpts from Sirkka Turkka's *Tule Takaisin, Pikku Sheba*  
(Helsinki: Tammi, 1987)

Life is a house swaying in the wind,  
a vine circles its walls and porch,  
laughter a quick cry.
The house must be sold soon, before it falls,  
the language you hear in the rooms is already monstrous.

How long for you sometimes when lightning conceals  
the sky, you are like Venice in December, when it rains.

Your neck is a barn door, a church wall,  
it narrows upward when seen from below  
when you stand on a ladder, drive a nail into a wall.

And the nail also reaches the sky  
and the sky infinity, this will never end,  
a knife is thrust through the heart  
now like the nail through the sky.

These houses must be sold, the buildings  
— I ponder, and the way hens always cross  
the road at Sannäs  
and poplars stand in a row  
like small, devout boys.

And I want you  
to tremble at last  
like a lake wet from rain  
lifts summer onto its wings,  
its swans  
When they still linger a moment  
avove the trees in the park,  
avove all the beloved gold  
When their colour is already  
whiter than snow  
whiter than the colour of parting.

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Two Poems by Eila Kivikkahoe

**Summer Poem**

I will not dress a child of mine in silk.  
Torn pants and a jacket of the wrong colour  
attire that won't hurt the eyes,  
won't clash with the patchwork glimmer  
of water, trees, paths, and land,  
with what beauty is.

Stay away from silk, little-finger,  
press your cheek against rough bark,  
you its sister.

**Dance**

Anguish had bulk. Yes. It had.  
But I cut it into small slivers,  
danced with light, slim ankles  
until it died.  
In my tale  
it shrank  
In my silence  
again crept near

Thus I let words slide  
like fine, fine sand,  
the weight on the head  
off the way dry leaves fly,  
lose, whatever the cost  
anguish, the only one ever dead.