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SHIRLEY ADELMAN

Empathy

My daughter suffers,
for another's suffering.
Shadows of eyebrows
on a mother,
with more tumors
than fingers can count.

Her daughter,
ashamed of suffering,
confides only in mine,
knowing
I was lucky.
Cancer left me left me

with a scarred breast:
tattooed dots,
a frame to radiation,
beamed
so early in the morning,
birds sang their thanks,
for another day.

Shirley Adelman's work has appeared in academic and literary journals in Canada, the United States, Israel, and South Africa. Most recently her work appeared in Jewish Currents and Blue Collar Review.