Verse: Terminal Girl

March 1, 1999 By River Huston

“That dress fits you well,”
you say,
as you sculpt my right breast
in the earth
with feet
no nails.
“I hope you don’t mind me saying
you look so good in that dress.”

Wet confession
a blur of preconceived sins
a litany
to a downtown beat.
You got *me*
written all over *you*,
honey.

You sculpt my left breast
nipple erect.

It gets deep.
In English that means
the clay turns red.

You read from a paperback
by the window.
I tell you
how to make me come.

It’s easy, honey,
say you love me.
I don’t care
if you lie.

Bent over

kitchen counter
onions, garlic, peppers
pressed against my belly

I am still chopping
as you call out your wife’s name.
There is no answer.

In a prayer to God
or this hotel room,

I begin a slow
undressing
of everything
I have ever done wrong.

The pile by the bathroom
keeps
getting bigger,

The lights don’t work here anymore.
I have used up all the cords
and eaten all the sockets.

I dream of suicide parlors,
Civilized and fair.

Believe me,
It’s no great feat
being a terminal girl.

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