

HAIR

I wonder how many strands of hair she has lost one by one
In her youth that she wishes she could have back now that all are gone.
How many single strands caught in an elastic
As she slid it out at night before bed,
How many may still cling to the grime of her shower drain,
How many she left on a lover's coat, that lover who has no idea
What a rare gift it was, what priceless value it carries now.

I wonder would she take the time now to gather them up if she could,
All the way back to her baby hairs. Did she leave any in the hospital crib?
Or on the doctor's hands or in her mother's womb?
Would she, if she could, weave a new head of hair with all those strands,
Golden from year one and gray from year 45, pink and blue and dark red
From in between, and wear them proudly
The way the bower bird displays his nest in triumph?

I stand on my front steps to comb my hair
After a shower and let the loose ones into the wind.
They catch on branches where I hope birds carry them off to their homes
So they can be of some use, these strands that have grown with me only to
Uproot, and perhaps some may carry all the way to her, so she may use them,
Or else return to me when it is my time to hope for hair.