The Fear of Women, the Fear of Men

Mary Gordon
Blonde as a newborn, you will walk out crying,
Starting again, and waving *buona sera*
To the loved couples on their motorcycles,
To the parading children with their candles.

You will keep on going.

**THE FEAR OF WOMEN, THE FEAR OF MEN**

*We come together strangers,*
*Fish and flower, flesh*
*Estranged from its*
*Dark prop, the other.*

Come near the quick,
The drum the world falls in on.
Tell me what you see.

*There is a ring of bone*  
*And some hard moss.*  
*I walk into a cave*  
*I see no end to.*  
*What do you see?*

A rich, blind intruder,  
Plainly damaging.

Quiet. Wait.

Your face is different.

Wait. Remember where we went today  
And yesterday. Remember stories,  
Jokes, our families.  
Remember how we met.

I was afraid.  
Remember?

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Mary Gordon
Yes. Grow warmer here.
Be with me. Rest.

Now I am March ice,
Hard black water breaking.
It is livable.
Put down here. Rest.

For now.

We rock together, sane
As snow, past history, here
Where we settle. Here
On solid ground,
The native animal,
Flat footed, climbing.