

Once

by Ali Giles

You were once a woman
they all turned to.

Here you are: missing him still, like a child
but you don't tell them
because
love is for the young.
He's a dull ache in your chest
he's a thousand sleepless hours herded nightly
and quiet, filling the corners
corralled by the ticking clock.

Rigid, the skeleton of habit alone upholds the human frame
And so every morning you get up
and every Sunday
you are reminded
you were once a woman they all turned to.