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Saving Her

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Saving Her

Deborah Kearns

I keep a bottle of her perfume
upon the shelf,
hidden behind a wall of books,
where the sudden sight of it
cannot take me by surprise.

Only this favorite fragrance of hers—
a 1970's mix of orange blossom and hyacinth—
can raise her from the dead.

30 years later, its familiar sweetness
is still too powerful for me to linger over.
It rends me between fury and grief.

And yet, I treasure that bottle of Anais Anais,
the only portal to her that remains.

Earlier than I can remember,
she led me to believe
I could save her.
But I couldn't.