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Tailor's Chalk

She presses her finger along the edge, over the rounded apex,
smoothes her thumb over the waxy plane of its side as she spreads
her dress on the table. She stands back, looks at the paper pattern,
crumples it, lets it drop.

The chalk jumps in her hand, she slashes bold lines
down the neckline, across the hem, through the darted sides.

She sweeps the dress to the floor, zig-zags the chalk over the door,
steps through. Roses and shrubs along the path splinter,
whirl leaves and twigs as she runs her chalk over them, scatter
behind her as she walks . She doesn't look back.

In town, she slices plate glass,
rattles the chalk through railings and shutters, deaf to crashes
and clangs as she passes. She lets herself into the office, scribbles
the shrinking chalk over desk, keyboard, monitor, crumbles
it over her diary and bulging files.

In the cloakroom, she draws a chalky finger
over the mirror, around the oval of her face, her curve of arm.
She traces her shape on the mirror over again, looks at her fingers,
licks them clear of chalk, steps through.