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## After Reading *The Gold Cell*

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After Reading *The Gold Cell*  
to Sharon Olds

You take me into the study, walls where your family  
portraits were, now only squares and rectangles  
of light, afterimages of frames burned in paint.  
I take your book off the shelf  
again, flit its pages beneath my nose.

I know this smell, the raw of sex waiting,  
the metallic scent that keys leave  
on my hand if I linger too long  
at the lock.

I want to close the book,  
skitter from the room, the way a bird leaves  
the safe height of her tree,  
after some perceived threat  
rattles the ground beneath her,  
instead of staying still,  
staying alive.

*Trish Lindsey Jagers*