

theHARLEQUIN

Carrie Fountain
Prayer (The Ledge)

You think it's in the skull,
behind the eyes, a room

you make and then walk into.
You think it's the feeling

of desperate thirst
that sometimes arises

after you've begun to drink
deeply, when it's only ever been

the feeling you got
when finally, after many weeks

of staring at the impeccable
outline the dove's body left

when it crashed into your office
window, open-winged, and died,

you finally hung your ass
onto the ledge and wiped it

away with a damp
Kleenex: the completion

of a perfect and miserable task.
Most often there is nothing —

really nothing — and the whole thing
feels like an idea you gave yourself,

like hypochondria, or even more
distant, the memory of hypochondria,

and even that idea is a place
you can't be right now, because right now

you are in the car, waiting out
the endless light at the corner

of MLK and Congress when the baby
suddenly says, *Song Mommy song now.*