

afterimage
by Sheri Doyle

baby kangaroo, newly out
of your mother's fleshy pouch,
we can be more than
the horrified spectators
of a viral photograph—
our thumbs hovering over
your limbs clenched to a wire fence

we can do more than
pause in our scroll and dream
of guiding you into a field of grass
 or the softness of shadows where
 ferns and mosses are heavy with dew
of leading you back to your mother

was that her in The New York Times
dashing before a burning house
across our orange lit phones—
her silhouette is the afterimage
on our white walls when we look up
in our dining rooms, spotted
on the mirrors of our bathrooms
or in our bedrooms on the windowpanes
 she is springing through glass
 onto clouds parting in twilight
 and now in the opening where
 on the full moon rising
 she leaps from flames in search of you