

Snow White and the Seven

*No matter what life you lead
the virgin is a lovely number*

—Anne Sexton

If you had a message for me
would the letter be transparent? Would it reach
me at the red moon crest
by the riverbed, the memory, not forming a complete picture
but ratcheted? I remember
when I thought everyone was like me, lost,
betrayed, seeing things in the sky's panoply, seven planets,

seven versions of me in one mirror,
after I threw the deer skull into
my shiny reflection, imago, seven coffins,
none of them receiving postcards.
Even in the cabin there were seven
of everything; when I tried the beds
they called me thief, addict.

Seven of everything, like days of creation, chakras.
You remember what it is to listen to the seven
symphonies of pleasure,
the torpedoes of light spitting their seven
fires into my hair, my ebony hair?
Seven deadly sins, and the worst one
was loving you. What still troubles me:

the dust dance, seven seas, seven continents.
My Italian sister, Maria, had seven robbers.

If only I'd kept traveling the beginning, but I was seven years old.
Now I can't remember what we talked about.
We were looking for coincidence and found the messiah
disappointing. If you do have a message for me—your letter quilled
in black ink—send it to me seven times.