After the Disaster

By Abigail Deutsch

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One night, not long after the disaster,
as our train was passing Astor,
the car door opened with a shudder
and a girl came flying down the aisle,
hair that looked to be all feathers
and a half-moon smile
making open air of our small car.

The crowd ignored her or they muttered
"Hey, excuse me" as they passed her
when the train had paused at Rector.
The specter crowed "Excuse me," swiftly
turned, and ran back up the corridor,
then stopped for me.
We dove under the river.

She took my head between her fingers,
squeezing till the birds began to stir.
And then from out my eyes and ears
a flock came forth — I couldn't think or hear
or breathe or see within that feather-world
so silently I thanked her.

Such things were common after the disaster.

Source: Poetry (March 2015)