The Rose

By Jean Valentine

a labyrinth,
as if at its center, 
god would be there—
but at the center, only rose, 
where rose came from, 
where rose grows—
& us, inside of the lips & lips: 
the likenesses, the eyes, & the hair, 
we are born of, 
fed by, & marry with, 
only flesh itself, only its passage 
—out of where? to where?

Then god the mother said to Jim, in a dream, 
Never mind you, Jim, 
come rest again on the country porch of my knees.

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