

Into the Room

by Grace McGovern

It occurred to me at the library
that my mind cannot hold itself

together much longer. The threads
stitched between the pink pillows

of my brain are frayed and tired
and I am tired, too. I was clutching

The Bell Jar to my chest
in a desperate bid to become

16 again but I remembered that
I was depressed then, too,

and I have been since I turned
11, since that night I asked my mom

why, sometimes, my head got filled
with cement, and she looked at me

with a fear that stayed until moments
before she died and finally could sigh

with relief that, *thank God*, she would be
first. A little girl shrieked behind me, all

pigtails and firing synapses, running from
Mom to Dad and back again. I scanned

Esther's patent black Mary Janes and could
already smell the gas seeping out of every

word. We cannot rewrite ourselves. Narratives
are just that.